E N D G A M E

by

Samuel Beckett

Thesis Production Book
prepared by

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In 1957 I portrayed the role of Pozzo in a summer revival of Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot". As Pozzo, I delivered the line "They give birth astride a grave, the light gleams an instant, then it's night once more". Each performance I grew more and more terrified to approach my final exit and to speak those hopeless words. And yet I was exhilarated to play the play, right up to my final exit.

For two years this line lingered in my mind. Then I read Beckett's"Endgame" and heard Hamm say "The end is in the beginning and yet you go on". I recognized the respect due a man who will live out his time fully, all in recognizing its futility.

That is why I have wanted to produce "Endgame". It asks the ultimate question concerning man's life; it asks the question with passion and without hedging, that is, without providing a bit of philosophical wishful-thinking designed to allay man's suffering and to serve as a temporary answer. The play is honest, confused, and magnificently real.

Mr. Beckett has as well made his expression through pure poetry: extraordinary rhythm, wide verbal color, and very moving word associations. It is these qualities of basic honesty and realism and the poetry of his expression that will be foremost in my mind as I plan my production of "Endgame".

Since I will be producing the play in a theatre permitting a freer use of space than is usual (the Boston University Theatre permits both traditional proscenium staging or any form

of "central staging"), I have first examined the play from the point of view of the audience's relationship to the actors. I find that the audience must be permitted as little personal involvement in the action of the play as is possible. Unless the spectator remains detached the impact of the situation will become dissipated through pity and sentimentality. The focus must remain clinical throughout. From this evolves my first staging requirement: aesthetic distance.

As a matter of fact, my second staging requirement evolves from this same point. The locale of "Endgame" is completely anonymous. It is a room with two windows high upon the walls, with a kitchen and with several specified articles of furniture. No other description is stated or infered in the script. Nor is the action of the play located in either time or situation. All remains anonymous.

Staging requirement number three is very clearly infered by the script: the four characters of the play are confined together in a tight little space, inescapably. This "togetherness" reaches terrifying proportions by the final curtain. The bounds of this space somehow represent the terrifying bounds of life. The must be clearly drawn and unbroken in definition.

Finally, I have recognized the play as completely realistic, despite the several times when Beckett seems to have the actors speak rather directly to the audience. The passion of the play is very real and is being suffered personally by the characters on stage. These characters are, in fact, well

drawn personalities and are not mere puppets designed to propound the playwright's ideas.

I have, therefore, four basic requirements to follow in staging the play: (1) to maintain aesthetic distance (2) to provide an anonymous locale (3) to create a tight and clearly defined space (3) to stage realistically.

My immediate thought is the operating-arena, where detached spectators can view with unemotional calm the very greatest of drama: the struggle between life and death. Bathe the arena in glaring clinical light so that the slightest movement is apparent; the struggle will become brilliantly real. Bring the interns close in and high up so that they become unobserved observers, playing no part in the drama below. Anonymity of locale, closely defined space, emotional detachment, realism of expression, all are easily discerned in the operating-arena. This then will be my space.

Obviously, I have chosen an "in-the-round" staging, the arena. Of course I will be blocked in my aim. Drawing my audience in close and raising it to affect the operating-arena will require considerable platform, more than is available. I am also faced with a problem of my own making. I have decided to bring Clov's kitchen on-stage, in full view of the audience. This results in two defined acting areas, a very poor situation in arena staging.

I will represent the kitchen on stage rather than simply have Clov disappear into an off-stage kitchen, in order to act

out the intolerable "togetherness" which both Hamm and Clov are so eager to break. Clov never really goes anywhere, as the author very carefully notes at the end of the play. He prepares an exit, but he never makes it. This point contains the meaning of the play as I intend to direct it: "The end is in the beginning, and yet you go on". There is no exit, there is not even five minutes' respite. Clov must not exit into an off-stage kitchen; he must suffer in full view of the audience.

Considerable experience in arena staging has taught me that when an audience must peer across one acting area in order to share in the action of a farther area, then an insufferable barrier has been created. The kitchen must not separate any segment of my audience from the more important area where Hamm and the two ash-bins are discovered. I will therefore produce "Endgame" in a three-quarter arena setting, placing the kitchen beyond the main acting area and raising it eight inches so that Clov (who never sits, at any rate) will always be visible above Hamm (who never stands, at any rate).

Thus, the audience will surround the action on only three sides. And since it is impossible to move the audience in close <u>and</u> up high, I will instead move the audience far back (eight feet at least) and define the acting area with a ground cloth. In this way, I hope to detach the audience without making the players remote and losing the clinical view. This is a poor second, however, to a recreation of the operating-arena first imagined.

It is unfortunate that I must now consider the fact that on opening night I must entrust my project to the hands of a group of actors. I could at best, however, play only a single one of the four roles. If I am to trust three actors, then I may as well trust four actors and stay off stage entirely. This will be the basis of my relationship with my actors: I will entrust the creation of the roles to the individual actor so long as that creation is in harmony with the other roles and with our interpretation of the play as a whole.

This quality of collaboration between actor and director is the more important since I will be seeking realistic acting values. Were I producing a play of a more presentational nature, or one of a more stylized theatricality, then I might exercise a stronger influence in the creation of the individual role. In the case of "Endgame", however, I will exercise as strong a hands-off technique as is possible, still controling the direction of the whole play.

Two principles will limit this spirit of collaboration: we will present the play as it is written, avoiding elaboration and embroidery. We will also avoid philosophic discussions of the play's theme or meaning.

Through our first principle I hope to maintain Beckett's own economy of expression, vocal and physical. I have accepted as a true dictum of the theatre that "economy breeds power". In the same manner, whatever visual and vocal effect that escapes the actor, almost in spite of himself, will possess an

honesty and truth far greater than that possible when working through theatrical effect, through business designed to "enrich" the playwright's words. While this might appear to be an indictment of the whole actor's art, it is not at all so. An actor need only enrich when the original material is thin. I do not consider Beckett's work thin. I consider it extraordinarily rich in truth, and that too much interpretation will merely hide and confuse this truth.

I have decided to refuse all discussion of the play's meaning until very late in rehearsal stage for two reasons. My actors are all too young to approach this question with humanity; they will rather intellectualize the play to death. The play will die in a welter of abstractions. I will first lead the actor to re-live the passion of the characters through action. Then, finally, we may be able to synthesize our experience into a meaningful whole. But not before experiencing the passion ourselves.

I hope to guide the actor gently into a character which will make all other characters possible, as well as lead to the conclusion of the play in a logical believable manner. Actually, however, the creation should be almost entirely the work of the actor. Of course, I may be forced to act as acting coach on occasion, to see that a character is realized at all. This will be a result of casting limitations and not my plan as director.

Never, never, never will I give an actor a line reading.

Instead, I must see to it that the actor understands and agrees with me on the meaning of the line. Then the reading sought for will come naturally and consistently. Too often have I, as an actor, suffered in trying to recreate an exact intonation that made sense only to the director. At any rate, I am much better equiped as an actor to create line readings than is the director. (In this case, the reverse is true).

In addition to working with the actor in rehearsal, I plan several off-stage conferences with him as a means of economy of time. Ideally, I would do all work in rehearsal, requiring all actors to assist in the understanding of all actors' actions. Since I am using student actors who have limited time to give up to an acting project, I will try to conserve time by confering off-stage and maintain rehearsal time for work on the whole.

Finally, I will make one giant imposition on my student actors. I am completely out of sympathy with the studio of actors which permits a cast of four to work through four weeks of rehearsal all wrapped in individual batts of cotton wool, assuming that something wonderful will happen in the end to draw them all together. Each actor will give something to the others and to the whole effort at each rehearsal. We will communicate at all times.

An extension of this imposition of acting technique will be the requirement that the actor find the "cue for passion" within his character. It is not my aim to create the fear of

drowning by imagining a cold shower. The deep mystery of "End-game" will not be created by reference to the trivia of our day to day lives.

The speech and movement patterns of this play are entirely realistic. Beckett's diction, however, is such that a word lost here or there will create confusion and the sense of non-sequitor. For this reason, I must cast my actors carefully and work with them carefully that no word is lost in performance.

Movement will be of extreme importance on the part of the three imobile actors (Hamm, Nell and Nagg). In no sense, however, is there a style of speech or movement involved. Standard American diction and natural movement are the optimum.

Nor will there be a style expressed in the scenery. I will produce in a modified arena arrangement and scenery will be minimum as concerns quantity. It will be focused heavily, however (economy always is), and will reflect the mood of the play without engaging in detail. The same is true of costume. The same is true of lighting. As a matter of fact, I wish I could produce the play in Shakespeare's Globe and say to hell with it all. Mr. Beckett would fare far better. He has a passion and all that is needed are two boards on which to display it.

Samuel Beckett was born in Dublin in 1906. He was fifty years old when he wrote "Endgame", no longer a rebellious youth. His first literary work had been published in 1930 (Whoroscope, a long poem), followed by a study of the life and works of Marcel Proust, a collection of short stories entitled "More Pricks than Kicks", a collection of poems called "Echo's Bones", a novel "Murphy", then a trilogy of novels ("Molloy", "Malone Dies", and the "Un-namable"), and the enormously successful "Waiting for Godot".

Both plays and the three novels of the trilogy were written originally in French and then adapted by Beckett himslf into English versions. Since "Endgame" he has written another play, "Krapp's Last Tape", as yet unproduced in America.

Beckett is usually characterized as a playwright of the new theatre, which term should be, of course, placed in quotation marks. Actually he is very new to the theatre. For that matter, the French theatre has been turning out plays of the nature of his since mid-nineteenth century. By this nature I mean a seeming lack of dramatic unity, the rejection of the Aristotilian theme.

It is not as playwright that Beckett has startled, but as philosopher and thinker, as a moralist. That he has chosen the grotesque as a vehicle of this morality is hardly new. The French were never, at any rate, very impressed with Victoria.

I have associated Beckett immediately with Lautréamont

in his use of the grotesque as vehicle of beauty, the use of laughter as a vehicle of solemnity. Lautreamont's only completed work, "Les Chants de Maldoror", dates from 1868. In the closing lines of Chant IV of that work he grows quite Beckettien in expressing at least one facet of his "ars poetica".

> " ... il m'arrivera d'énoncer, avec solennité, les propositions les plus bouffonnes...! Je ne puis m'enpêcher de rire, me répondrez-vous; j'accepte cette explication absurde, mais, alors, que ce soit un rire mélancholique. Riez, mais pleurez en même temps. Si vous ne pouvez pas pleurer par les yeux, pleurez par la bouche. Est-ce encore impossible, urinez; mais, j'avertis qu'un liquide quelconque est ici nécessaire, pour attenuer la sécheresse que porte, dans ses flancs, le rire...."

The surrealistic qualities of Beckett's plays is hard to deny, surrealism being devoted to the "superior reality of certain forms of association such as those found in dreams and in the hallucinations of the insane... Surrealistic painting is often distinguished by meticulous detail and brushwork intended to achieve an uncanny illusion of reality in spite of the deliberate incongruity in the choice and association of the objects shown in the picture". (1)

Beckett has sought to communicate to his audience something rather more intelligible to the feelings than to the intellect, symbolism as well as surrealism. It must not be forgotten that one of the great interests of Beckett's early academic life was the work of Proust, who stated in "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu" that all true art must strive to

> "... retrouver, de ressaisir, de nous faire connaître cette réalité loin de laquelle nous vivons, de laquelle nous nous écartons de plus en plus au

> fur et à mesure que prend plus d'épaisseur et d'imperméabilité la connaissance conventionnelle que nous lui substituons, cette réalité que nous risquerions fort de mourir sans l'avoir connue, et qui est tout simplement notre vie, la vraie vie."

And indeed, neither "Endgame" nor "Waiting for Godot" are to be perceived by a"conventional knowledge", the tool so usefull in the perception of a realistic or naturalistic drama.

But it is not merely in mode of expression and artistic principle that Beckett has stemmed from the same source as Proust; it is even more in the philosophical system revolving around "... Time, that double-headed monster of damnation and salvation." (2) Beckett has turned, with Proust, to Arthur Shopenhauer, who did of course reinstruct them in the literary technique of leaving something unsaid. "Everything must not be given directly to the senses... and indeed the ultimate thing must always be left over for the fancy to do.... In art the best of all is too spiritual to be given directly to the senses; it must be born in the imagination of the beholder, although begotten by the work of art." (3) More important to both Beckett and Proust, however, were Shopenhauer's Will thesis, wherein Man is happy and at peace only when he denies his will, negates it and "wills not to will." (4)

I have been aided most in my work on "Endgame" through a study of Beckett's study of Proust. While the work was done some twenty-five years before he wrote this play, it obviously contains a valid statement of Beckett's own artistic bent and philosophy, by which he is measuring and analysing Proust.

In some instances there is an almost startling relationship between critical passages from "Proust" and dramatic passages from the play "Endgame". "Tragedy is not concerned with justice... The tragic figure represents the expiation of original sin, of the original and eternal sin of him and all his 'soci malorum', the sin of having been born." (5) Compare this with Clov's opening line, indeed the opening line of the play: "Finished, it's finished, nearly finished, it must be nearly finished.... I can't be punished any more." And with Hamm's line to his father "Accursed progenitor!"

The death wish is not nearly so evident in "Endgame" as the wish to negate birth, to finish the expiation and to enter the "néant", the cotton-wool of eternity, of nihilism.

As with every Existentionalist thinker from Kierkegaarde to Sartre, this philosophy being expressed in the will of man, the philosophy is given a very personal expression in the passion of individual man. It is this quality of the personal which makes either "Waiting for Godot" and "Endgame" a very moving experience. Space may be abstracted, local-color may be pre-empted, but there is no abstraction of either time, man's soul, or his passion. These remain real and personal.

My greatest research in preparation for "Endgame" has been a re-reading of the Bible, which I read in Moffat's re-translation. Beckett uses Judeo-Christian images with extra-ordinary frequency and each reference carries with it a wealth of emotional color, often much more important to his meaning than

the intellectual import of the religious reference.

Beckett can, of course, communicate his full meaning to an audience totally ignorant of the philosophic, literary, and ritualistic forces that moved him. Perhaps, too, the actor may succeed in communicating the passion of the play without a knowledge of these backgrounds. I think, however, that the director of one of Beckett's plays had better go back to his sources. Beckett was obviously not writing in a philosophic void.

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(1) Guthrie, Raymond and Diller, George E., "French Thought and Literature since the Revolution", p.576, Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1942.

(2) Beckett, Samuel, "Proust", p.1, Grove Press, New York, 1931.

(3) Shopenhauer, Arthur, "The World as Will and Idea" (1819), quoted from Randall, John, "Readings in Philosophy", p.248, Barnes and Noble, Inc., New York, 1946.

(4) Frost, S.E.jr., "Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers", p.104, Garden City Publishing Company, New York, 1942.

(5) Beckett, Samuel, op.cit., p. 49.

COSTUME PLOT

Hamm - dressing-gown: rich, deep colors in worn dirty velvet. high neck, closing beneath chin. reaching to feet.
toque - a turban like hat, round with a peak. again rich in color and fabric but old and dirty.
lap-rug - heavy and somber, must give the impression that it may contain all sorts of vermin and certainly the stench of urine.

Clov - white cotton or linen suit, old and shapeless. perhaps the linen coat and jacket worn by counter-men and kitchen-helpers. open neck.
slippers - old-fashioned, soft-soled night shoes, worn and dirty. must cause a shuffling sound as Clov moves.
boots - heavy old workmen's shoes, dirty and scuffed. must make a heavy noise as Clov moves.

Nell - nightgown - old and lacy, white, snapping close around her neck. very delicate.
night hat - same nature as gown, delicate.

Nagg - nightgown - old-fashioned nightshirt, open at neck, long sleeves. white
night hat - the long pointed type, with tassel on the end. white.

MAKE-UP PLOT

Hamm - very red face, spade beard and sideburns, steel gray. aged about fifty-five years, vigorous but heavily lined, hawk-like. should perhaps use mustache as well as beard.

Clov - very red face, aged about thirty years. draw eyebrows together somewhat in brute aspect. few lines. he is vigorous and strong. no beard or mustache.

Nell - very white face, extreme age, bird-like quality, white hair, prominent nose and eyes, heavily lined.

Nagg - same as Nell, somewhat more vigorous, more mobile face, black out all teeth.

General - since play is produced in arena, all make-up must be subtle and realistic. highlighting and shadowing rather than heavy lines. Stage lighting will be predominantly steel blue (no. 29)

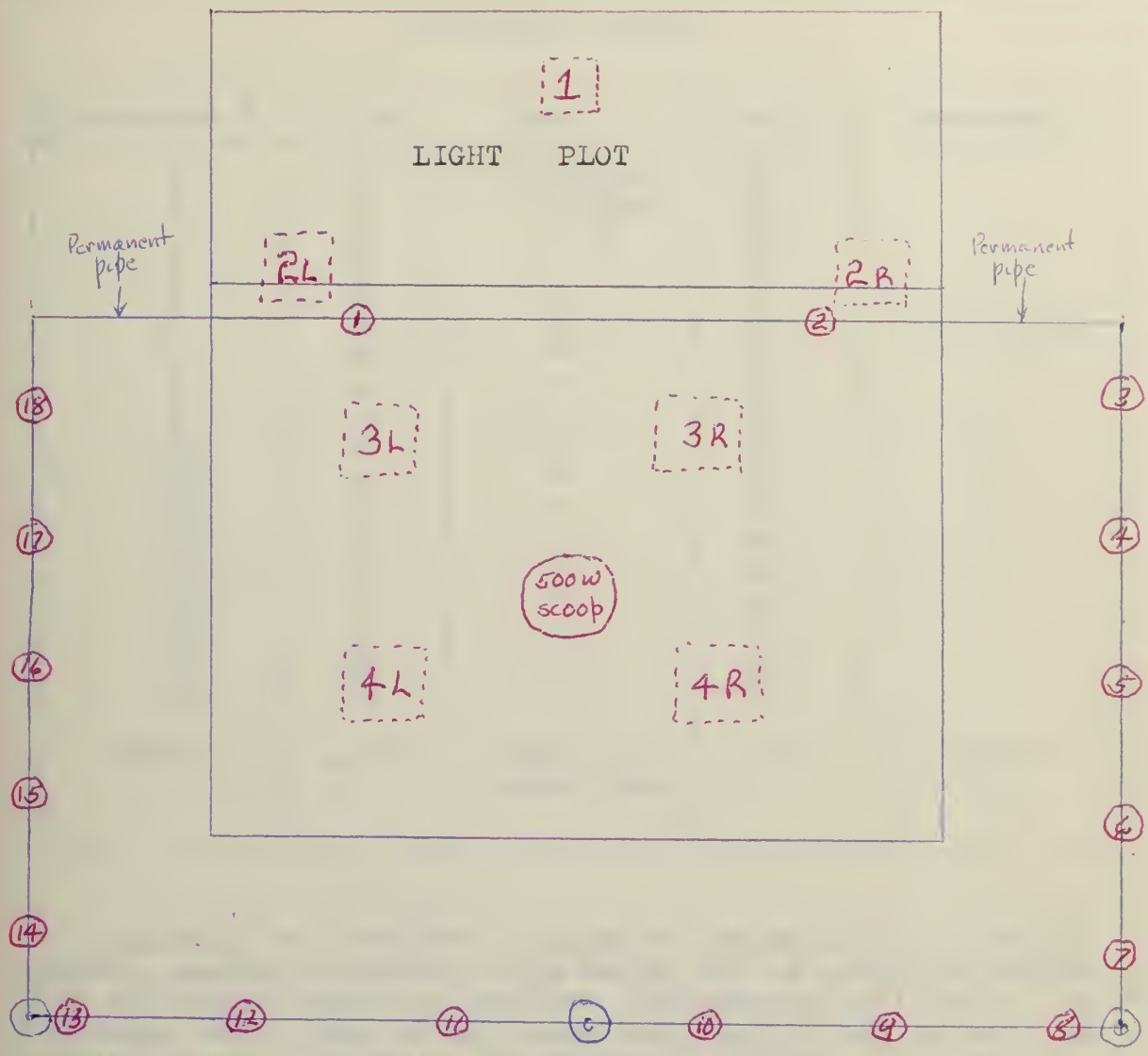
PROPERTY PLOT

Hamm's chair - ornate and throne-like, on casters, with arms. Back must not be high enough to block kitchen.
Ash-bins - two wooden barrels, old and used, with lids hinged on one side and with handles inside and out. Knock out bottoms and place over holes in platform. Size must accomodate actors.
Table - small (two feet square) undecorated table painted gray or black. Neutral in aspect.
Sheets - two worn and grayish sheets, one to cover both barrels (double) and one to cover Hamm (single).
Ladder - four foot step ladder, fixed so as not to fold. Dirty wood, aged.
Handkerchief - blood-stained rag for Hamm's "stancher". Stain with red tempera. See cover of Grove Press edition of "Endgame".
Black glasses - heavy round frames, painted opaque black on inside. Provide early in rehearsal.
Whistle - for Hamm. A child's "police" whistle, preferably black, tied to a string or ribbon long enough to reach from Hamm's neck to his lap as he is seated.
Biscuit - any sort of hard soda cracker.
Telescope - of any nature, not too small. Must be dropped from ladder. Telescope must be worthless, preferably with no glass.
Clock - an old fashioned alarm with loud bell and no hands. It should have bell atop the housing rather than concealed.
Gaff - a boating gaff with pike at one end. Must appear to be a dangerous weapon.
Hat - for Clov's exit. Preferably a derby. Otherwise, any nondescript felt hat.
Coat - for Clov's exit. A somber, worn top-coat.
Umbrella - for Clov's exit, old and worn. Black rolled umbrella if possible.
Dog - black and silky toy dog with one leg missing.
Flea-powder - a shaker type box, painted a neutral color, with no lettering.

SOUND PLOT

The play calls for no sound or music effects. I will use the traditional French signal for the opening of the play, "les trois coups de Moliere", three sharp bangs backstage immediately before the curtain.

The clock mentioned in the property plot will be operative and will sound throughout the play. Both the time and alarm mechanisms should be strong and loud.



Instruments used:

500 watt scoop	(1)	cantilevered out from permanent pipe which was attached to ceiling. home-made louver used to limit light to acting area (round edge, soft edge). used to blend areas 3 and 4 and to highlight center spot (location of Hamm's chair.
150 watt birdseye	(18)	2 were attached to permanent pipe to highlight table area in kitchen. 16 were attached to temporary pipe on three pipe standards and attached to permanent pipe. Used PAR 38 flood lamps.

LIGHT PLOT (cont)

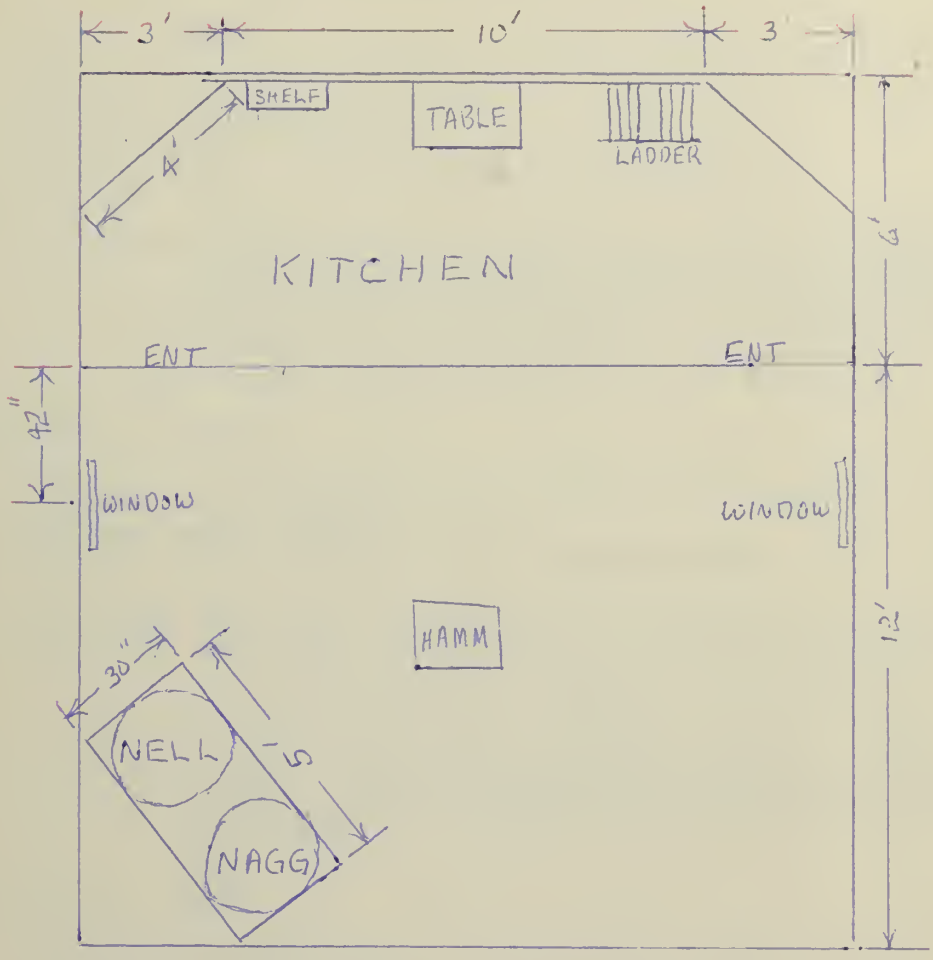
Instrument #	area	lamp	color	accessory
1	1	Par 38 fl	80	
2	1	" 150w	29	
3	2r	"	29	
4	3r	"	29	
5	3r	"	29	
6	4r	"	29	stove pipe
7	3r	"	29	"
8	4r	"	29	"
9	3r	"	80	"
10	41	"	29	"
11	4r	"	80	"
12	31	"	29	"
13	41	"	80	"
14	31	"	80	"
15	41	"	80	"
16	31	"	80	
17	31	"	80	
18	21	"	80	
scoop	gen'l	500w mog screw base	29	louver

Lighting was focused to achieve the smoothest possible spread, completely even. This could not be achieved perfectly with the small number of smaller instruments available. In refocusing, dead areas action-wise were sacrificed to more important areas, following the paths of action. This was a sacrifice since the audience sees the lighted (or dark) floor of all areas at all times.

Instruments were ganged at random on the six 1000 watt transformer dimmers of a Powerstat Package. There were no light cues other than opening and closing the show. The lighting areas pictured are entirely arbitrary and all areas were lighted to the same brilliance at all times. The areas pictured were more a means of controlling the direction of focus of the instruments and to see that each area was amply covered.

Both the daylight blue and the chocolate worked well with the only colors on stage: Hamm's robe, toque, and lap-rug, all in blues and maroons.

GROUND*PLAN



Both the kitchen area and the ash-bins were raised six inches. The ash-bin platform was cut-out below to provide more foot-room for Nell and Nagg.

Backing the kitchen area was a three fold flat ten feet high, painted a nondescript grey-white. Five feet high on the wall was a shelf with clock, telescope, biscuits, etc.

The windows noted were mere frames suspended from the ceiling, eight feet high at the bottom edge.

The outline of the acting area before the kitchen was delineated by two lines of masking tape six inches apart.

Clov used imaginary entrances in and out of the kitchen marked "ENT". Nothing delineated these entrances.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

STAGE MANAGER'S PERFORMANCE LOG

Friday, Nov. 6, 1959

Curtain up: 8:05 p.m.
Curtain down : 9:55
Running time: one hour and fifty minutes

Comments: Well received performance. Hamm was prompted frequently but held character throughout. Too much time was consumed in taking places in black-out. Must rehearse. Audience two-thirds filled, approximately sixty people.

Monday, Nov, 9, 1959

Curtain up: 4:00 p.m.
Curtain down: 5:40
Running time: one hour and forty minutes

Comments: Colorless performance, very quiet audience. No prompting needed. To avoid a long black-out while taking places, the house was opened only five minutes before curtain time, after actors had already taken places. Effect was good. Small audience at opening but grew during first scene. Aproximately fifty people.

Monday, Nov 9, 1959

Curtain up: 8:55
Curtain down: 11:00
Running time: two hours and five minutes

Comments: Curtain was held for twenty-five minutes to permit students working on major production to attend performance. Unfortunate decision since those who arrived on time were impatient when curtain finally went up. Audeince was allowed to be seated early and actors entered in black-out as originally planned. Audience warmed immediately, particularly to the humorous lines. Audience filled. Approximately one hundred.

Over-all comment: The operation of this show is quite simple: two light cues, no sound cues, and a minimum of props. All actors are on stage at all times. A careful check of stage props before curtain and attention to the final light cue is all that the stage crew may attend to.

DIRECTOR'S LOG

Mon. Oct 12 3:30 p.m. (Room 408 Admiral Building)
Held initial readings. Very few actors showed. Stage Manager explained that I am a "new director." Luckily I need only a cast of four. Actors are all extraordinarily young. "Endgame" needs no youth.

Tues. Oct. 13. 10:00 a.m.
Conferred with Marilyn Dexheimer concerning staging methods and scenery. Sketched general plan and promised to leave details in her hands. Suggested she even think about totally different production scheme.

3:30 p.m. (Room 408)
Second readings. Again very few actors present. Depressing but not terrible. I can see several possibilities. Checked each possibility for vocal flexibility and ability to take direction.

Wed. Oct. 14. 11:00 a.m.
Posted "call-back" notice for actors who seemed possible.

3:30 p.m. (Room 408)
Final readings. Several new actors showed. Total number of actors who auditioned is now twelve (in a department of over two hundred students!).

5:00 p.m.
Conferred with Stage Manager over casting. She (Judith Abbott) is more familiar with their past work. Found we agreed in most instances. Cast as follows:

Hamm --- Albert Sinkys
Clov --- Paul Cooper
Nagg --- Ivan Cury
Nell --- June Lewin

5:30 p.m.
Posted cast list and first rehearsal call.

Thurs. Oct. 15. 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. (Room 408)
First rehearsal. Set forth two basic principles for rehearsal: no discussion of philosophic "theme" (particularly with outsiders), and no elaboration upon business demanded by playwright. Explained ground plan and had actors walk through script immediately (pages 1-29). Clov himself adapted Beckett's blocking to the ground plan. General excitement. No discussion.

Fri. Oct. 16. 4:00 - 6:30 p.m. (Room 408)

Fri. Oct. 16. 4:00 - 6:30 p.m. (Room 408)
Walk-through, pages 29-49, fifteen-minute break; then pages 49-79, saving final pages until much later, in order to avoid immediate anticipation of mood. Began to explore meanings of words and references with actors.

Mon. Oct. 19. (Second week) 7:00 - 10:00 pm (Room 408)
Pages 1-24; 1-43; 27-43. Further exploration of meanings of words and references. Actors are becoming familiar with lines. First efforts of actors to force a discussion of philosophic theme. Refusal. Proved my point by asking a few pointed questions of actors concerning their lines. No answer. How can we understand the whole without first understanding the part?

Tues. Oct. 20. 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. (Room 408)
Walk-through page 27-end of play. Refining pattern of Clov's movement. Intensive work with Hamm to achieve atronger emotions (fury, terror, etc.), but with complete control. Both actors are slowing down in their progress, with some resulting depression. We need now to move from mechanical run-through and minutiae towards an understanding of the "actions" of the play.

Wed. Oct. 21. 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. (Room 408)
Study <u>actions</u> of Clov and Hamm in pages 1-5, and repeat. Do same with Nagg and Nell with pages 14-23. Encouraged actors toward personal study of their actions throughout the play. Warned that we had not enough time for a complete study in rehearsal. Necessity of homework.

Thurs. Oct 22. 1:00 p.m.
Conference with Clov for detailed study of his actions, to aid him in setting a pattern of personal study.

2:00 p.m.
Same conference with Hamm. Added study of symbols revolving about Hamm (stancher, dog, whistle, gaff, blindness, paralysis, "heart in head").

7:00 - 10:00 p.m. (Room 408)
Ran entire play. Nell and Nagg without scripts. Running time: 1½ hours. Play will run longer since we are not using our pauses. Mr. Thommen was present at rehearsal. Gave no notes to actors. Conferred with Mr. Thommen for three hours after rehearsal (until 1:00 a.m.). Extraordinarily valuable session. He has aibility to excite my mind to investigate hidden qualities. I cannot even imagine how <u>he</u> would direct the play. He does not advance ideas, simply asks "un-loaded" questions in areas where he feels I am lax or unconscious.

His most valuable question: how to use the enormous number of "pauses" in the script. These are, of course, readjustments of character. They are long or short or medium, but they are pauses, and must be a part of the movement of the play. I am extremely grateful for Mr. Thommen's aibility to excite me without guiding me. The play will remain my expression.

Fri. Oct. 23. 4:00 - 5:45 (Room 408)
Ran through pages 1-27, then pages 1-25 with no scripts. Actors very poor on lines. Lines very difficult to memorize. I sympathize, but berate the actors, since an even greater effort is required.

Mon. Oct. 26 (Third week) 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. (Room 408)
Ran pages 1-39 without scripts. Lines much better. Designer Marilyn Dexheimer and light designer Richard Van Deusen present at rehearsal. She see difficulty of stage relationships with barrels upstage (behind and right of Hamm). We discuss means of improving ground plan to allow clearer relationships. With actors I begin discussions of backbone of the play: alternating moments of game-playing (habit) and agony (conscious).

10:00 - 11:30 p.m.
Conference with Dexheimer (designer) and Van Deusen (light designer) to re-design ground plan. We decide to bring barrels downstage, which presents sight-line problems. We explore means of combatting these latter problems. Decision that we must place barrels downstage and find a way to avoid sight-line problems (the lesser evil, at any rate). I am depressed to have brought myself to a state of choosing the lesser evil rather than the greater good.

Tues. Oct. 27 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. (Room 408)
Pages 1-39 (and repeat). Study of re-occurring lines, study of title "Endgame" and the alternating games and realities of the play. Spent considerable time reviewing with my cast the Aristotelian concept of quest - passion - realization (or purpose - passion - perception). We discover the quest, we discover the "passion", we cannot find the perception in either Hamm or Clov (or in Punch and Judy).

Wed. Oct. 28 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. (Room 408)
Page 1-39; page 14-39. Mr. Hirsch present to help both in make-up design and in general concept of play. Discussed with Hamm his "needs," his "desires." Re-ran to page 50 without script, asking cast to play it for

comedy. This is necessary since cast is growing so grim. Had June Lewin quote criticism of Beckett which characterized his as "comic genius."

Thursday, Oct. 29 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. (Room 408) Began to work in "beats" for the first time. Found that most actors were unclear as to what a beat actually is. After a short explanation and defining of terms, all seemed to understand. Worked intensively two short scenes: page 27-29 and page 29-31. Began to ask actors to attend to a sense of rythm in the beats. This work in beats has immediate results and excites the actors greatly.

Friday, Oct. 30 4:00-6:00 p.m. (Room 408) Continued working in beats, less intensively than last night, covering much more ground, page 31 to final curtain.

7:00-11:00 p.m. Same as afternoon, page 1-50. Find actors much more able to analyze their own actions, even to define the limits of their beats. Actors again feel the power of self-control. I fade into the background.

Monday, Nov. 2 (Third week) 4:00-6:00 p.m. (Lower Lobby) We must rehearse here during afternoons this week so that the technical crew will be able to work in Room 210. In order to push my production through, I feel I must work with the crew. They know so little about arena set-up. My stage manager, Judy Abbot, will conduct afternoon rehearsals, planning simply to tighten up on lines and to arrive at a feeling of security. Pages 48-84, the section I have rehearsed least.

7:00-11:00 p.m. (Room 210) Seating platforms and the kitchen level are set-up. The whole area has a sense of theatre. Still no barrels but all other props are in use. Good prop crew! I must settle the barrel business myself. Gave play two run-throughs up to page 68. Lines were too weak after that point. Sought volumn level and comfort within acting area.

Tuesday, Nov. 3 4:00-6:00 p.m. (Lower Lobby) Stage Manager ran actors through page 65-84 twice, study of lines again. I worked in 210 with the crew. Picked up two large wooden barrels this morning.

7:00-11:00 p.m. (Room 210) Ran entire play twice without scripts. Light battons are up with a few spots to give sense of theatre. Good! Worked for actor's adjustments at change of beats. Hamm's lines still shaky.

Wednesday, Nov. 4 4:00-6:00p.m. (Lower Lobby) Stage Manager ran play, seeking to speed up action. (Last night's rehearsal seemed endless.) I worked in Room 210 with crew.

7:00-11:00p.m. (Room 210) Lights are up, focused and geled. Some re-focusing will be necessary. Insufficient instruments for job. Back wall is complete. All props in use. Some things need painting and adjusting but all is operative. Ran play in costume and make-up. Took expansive notes on details and carefully avoided all longer discussion. Actors are distracted by technical details. Thank heavens I ran costume and make-up tonight!

Thursday, Nov. 5 4:00-6:00p.m. (Lower Lobby) Stage Manager ran play for still more speed. I worked with crew to push through final details on lights and props. I should be with cast at this time, but this system is absolutely necessary at this point.

7:00-11:00p.m. (Room 210) Uninterrupted run-through (one hour and forty-five minutes), then re-ran isolated spots for business and blocking clarity. Good show. I feel secure, as do actors. I only hope my audience is awake and aware. A sleepy audience will find this deadly.

Friday, Nov. 6 4:00-6:00p.m. (Room 210) Run-through. No discussion. Rather colorless show, of course, but Hamm is considerably more secure on lines.

7:30 (Student Lounge) Met with actors to read them my statement of intention which will introduce the student critique tonight (which they will not attend - the actors). Statement revolves around non-aristotilian aspect of show: Lack of catharsis, passion without perception. Actors are not really interested. They have a play to perform not an idea to propoind. What a far cry from opening rehearsals! I feel very confident of actors with this attitude.

8:05-9:55P.M. (Room 210) Good performance of play. I am pleased. Any weaknesses are my own. Actors acheived all we had worked on, and then some. Hamm needed frequent prompting but maintained his character perfectly.

10:10-11:30p.m. (Room 210) Student critique of performance. Conducted by Mr. Hirsh who was not taken in by my statement of intention (which was itself intended to subtly forestall any questions concerning my interpretation and direction of the play. I hoped rather for criticism of details. Mr. Hirsh boldly opened me up to the full attach of the students. I got it! All major criticisms are

noted under comments at student critique. Must note here Ted Hadjipantazis' near angry comment that I had not "directed" the play but merely "staged" it. I am pleased to hear this since this was my aim: to produce the play without my "mark". There was, nevertheless, some discussion whether I might not have "enriched" the play in production. I began to shout my answer and had to be calmed by Mr. Hirsh. Good critique but limited by an atmosphere of attack and parry.

Saturday, Nov. 7 2:00-6:00; 7:00-11:00p.m. (Room 210) Run through afternoon and evening to affect improvements suggested by critique. Diction of actors, different vocal levels and qualities for Hamm and Clov, Clov's movement. Attention to actions and words that were fuzzy in critique performance. Mr. Hirsh aided in business of sheets at opening of play. Much smoother and meaningful as ritual.

Sunday, Nov. 8 3:00-6:00; 8:00-11:00p.m. (Room 210) Same process as yesterday. Amazing gain in clarity. Hamm very secure on lines. Actors growing cocksure with too many compliments from outside. I keep quiet. Monday afternoon will snap them back. (The ordinary Tuesday matinee has been moved to Monday afternoon with my approval, (to clear Room 210 a day early for legitimate reasons).

Monday, Nov, 9 4:00-5:30p.m. (Room 210) Matinee performance colorless, dull, drab. All changes have been effected and performance is smooth as cotton-candy and about as satisfying. Actors suffer from a good opening performance and too many compliments. Happily, they feel the full boredom of the matinee audience and are back at work when the curtain rings down.

5:30-7:30 p.m. Actors are brought in lunch and begin to savor the pleasures of "two a day". They have a chance to go back immediately and do it right. Luckily, they are all young and will not suffer too much from the fatigue of the matinee performance.

8:30 p.m. Delayed performance twenty minutes so that crew of major production ("Kinderspiel") downstairs in main theatre will be free to see "Endgame". Many graduate students involved in"Kinderspiel". Bad decision! Audience is disgruntled at having to wait. Show must open before a mildly hostile house. Also, since audience got into hall early we must take places during black-out and not before house is opened (one of improvements effected after critique.). Good performance, much clarity, but missed the inspirational brilliance of opening night. This is not necessary. Why does it happen?

11:15-12:40 p.m. (Faculty Lounge) Faculty Critique with actors, stage manager, and myself. Faculty spoke with each actor in turn concerning acting values and how they did or did not achieve them. Actors left and I was faced with the faculty. General criticism: needed more research and preparation. Received lists of questions to be dealt with in "production essay". Adjourned to neighboring cafe for tea.

NOTE: Wednesday, Nov. 28 7:00 p.m. rehearsal at Admiral Building (Room 410) Rehearsal attended by Mr. Hirsh, to discuss make-up requirements of play. Had conference with Mr. Hirsh after rehearsal to discuss need for variety in the performances (light-dark), and particularly to discuss the "play-acting" of Hamm. Tremendous insight into Hamm.

Boston University School of Fine and Applied Arts
Division of Theatre Arts

GRADUATE THESIS PRODUCTIONS

Authorization Procedure

Name of student Gordon H Argo

Play "Endgame" Author Samuel Beckett

PROCEDURE		DATE ACCOMPLISHED
1. Authorization:		
Samuel Hersch	Directing Chairman	Oct 7, 1959
	Division Chairman	Oct 7, 1959
2. Tentative dates registered with:		
James V Nicholson	Production Manager	Sept 25, 1959
3. Production timetable completed:		
	Production Manager	Sept. 25, 1959
4. Student designers assigend:		
James V. Nicholson	Production Manager	Oct. 9, 1959
	Chairman of Design	Oct 9, 1959
5. Design scheme approved:		
	Chairman of Design	

6. Production Expense:

	PROPOSED BUDGET	ACTUAL BUDGET
Scenery	$ —	$ —
Properties	$ 5.00	$ 6.38
Costumes	$ 2.00	$ 2.00
Lighting	$ —	$ —
Sound & Music	$ —	$ —
Transportation	$ 15.00	$ 15.00
Scripts	$ 8.75	$ 2.50
Photographs	$ —	$ —
Miscellaneous	$ 5.00	$ 1.00
TOTAL	$ 35.75	$ 31.88

7. Budget approved:	Division Chairman	Oct 21, 1959
8. Production staff assigned:		
James V Nicholson	Production Manager	Oct. 14, 1959
9. Production Book received:		
	Faculty Advisor	
10. Production Book approved:		
Samuel Hersch	Directing Chairman	January 1, 1960
	Division Chairman	

Boston University School of Fine and Applied Arts
Division of Theatre Arts

GRADUATE THESIS PRODUCTION

Production Timetable

Date Nov. 9, 1959

Student Gordon H. Argo

Play "Endgame"

Author Samuel Beckett

Date of approval by Faculty Committee Oct. 7, 1959

Casting, Thursday and Friday Oct. 8-9 SFA, Room 410

Rehearsals begin Monday Oct 12 SFA, Room 410

Final (4) week of rehearsals, Monday Nov 2-5 Theatre, Room 210

Faculty Critique, Friday evening 7:00 p.m. Nov 6 Theatre, Room 210

Performances, Monday evening, 8:00 p.m. Nov. 9

Monday ~~Tuesday~~ matinee, 4:00 p.m. Nov. 9

Defense of Production Plan Book before Faculty Committee, Monday ~~Wednesday~~, 10:30 ~~3:30~~ p.m.

Nov. 9, 1959

Completed Thesis Production Book due for final faculty review and approval,

Monday Nov. 30, 1959 (two weeks after performances)

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COMMENTS AT STUDENT CRITIQUE, FRI. NOV. 6, 1959

Aspect of play too neat and clean: floor of acting area, costumes, Hamm's beard, painting of kitchen wall.

Clov must bend from waist in picking up objects, rather than stooping, which approximates a sitting position.

General curiosity as to the actual locale of play; questioned abstract locale of setting.

Questionned low-keyed performance and lack of "enriching" business: too great economy of movement. (I disagree!)

Question: would staging be different in subsequent production? (My answer: Yes! Problem of ash-cans must be solved.)

General dissatisfaction that actors experienced no "perception" in answer to their quest. My goal exactly: discomfort.

Should there be an essential change in the characters in the middle of the play? (Yes, but very near the end. It is a negation of the will to escape, to end.)

Why was there no more attention paid to the death of Nell?

How did I use the symbols in the play (ladder, ash-cans, telescope, etc.)? (I didn't use them. They are a direct communication between author and audience. With any focus they loose their power and become obvious and inane.)

Were the long silences in the play mere pauses or readjustments of character? (Readjustments: consideration, acceptance, rejection, evaluation, decision.)

Hamm's feet showing beneath rug were distracting.

Never felt sense of plodding movement of Clov. Is this a limitation of arena ? (No, it is a point which must be corrected in rehearsal.)

Clov must not appear to look through imaginary wall.

Performance took cue from what is said rather than from action.

Several members of the audience again demand that more attention be paid to actors' business. (I recognize in these voices student actors who need must <u>act</u>, who decry the lack of technique. Poor play-wright, he goes forgotten.

Nervous quality of Hamm's speech is contagious. Clov picks it up. This results in Clov's voice going against the quality of his movement and his action. (Must be corrected in further rehearsal.)

Need for better articulation on part of all actors. Many words and entire lines were lost in muffled diction.

GENERAL COMMENT ON STUDENT CRITIQUE

Students were vociferously <u>for</u> and <u>against</u> the interpretation and performance. An honest effort was made to avoid any evaluation of my interpration of the play literarily and philosophically. Most general criticism revolved around the extreme economy of action and vocal effect. On the other hand, few students felt any monotony in the result. They merely asked for an enrichment of the action. I feel this is a result of their training and the nature of the theatre to which they have been subjected during the past twenty-five years.

FACULTY COMMENTS ON PRODUCTION

Give more attention to opening ritual of ladder, windows and sheets. Define action more clearly. Too much detail in removal of sheets. Dissipates interest.

Work on music of actors' voices: achieve different vocal levels and rythms for Hamm and Clov. Attend to builds and decrescendos.

Hamm's long speech too jerky and lacking in bass tones. (result of actor's insecurity on lines and nervousness.)

Actors glide over too many visual images of beauty and grotesque as in "sails of herring fleet", etc.

Too many significant lines thrown away with poor diction. They are perhaps "throw-away" lines but they must be heard and sometimes even focused.

What is the nature of the play: emotions, or ideas, or personifications of humanity?

"What's the matter with your feet?" Should there not be a readjustment of Clov's manner of walking as well as boots?

How can you use the ladders better for acting values? (Rehearse)

The final moment of the play must build in significance even if the rythm dies down.

Hamm's "stancher" must be bloodier.

Define more clearly the kitchen entrances and exits.

SUMMARY OF FACULTY COMMENTS

Faculty advisors were concerned more with details of effecting my original objectives. The use of voice seemed to be our greatest weakness: color and diction. They asked more effective use of acting areas and levels (without loading the action with business.) I was questioned closely on the matter of my stated unwillingness to "sugar-coat the play and make it more palatable for the audience".

FACULTY CRITIQUE NOV. 9, 1959

Noted general improvement in actors' diction and comprehension of action. Noted as well a drop in spontaneous excitement generated in performance.

Hamm-Clov relationship much clearer and well controlled.

Hamm - much more authority but still lacks controlling discipline.

Clov - listening more to authority of Hamm. Still does not seem familiar with objects he is handling. Made audience much more aware of physical despair. Became more relaxed (as actor) as play progressed.

Nell - variety of color and good sense of rythm. Broke thru character, however, on occasion.

Nagg - more delicacy of thought, more in the play. Better articulation. Broke character at story, however.

COMMENTS TO DIRECTOR

If you had it to do over again, would you do it? Under the same conditions? (Gentle suggestion to review my staging and use of space.)

If you had to cut twenty minutes from the running time of the play, how would you do it? Would it hurt the play?

What is the philosophy of the play? How does it relate to esisting systems of philosophy?

DIRECTOR'S EVALUATION

My choice of "Endgame" as a graduate thesis production was a very happy one. Apart from the personal stimulation that I experienced from the play, it was a happy choice in more practical matters.

Since the cast was rather small, four characters, I was in no wise at the mercy of actor "supply and demand". My actors were never involved with another dramatic production and were thus prepared to devote full time and thought to this production. Where it became necessary to become an "acting teacher" in addition to director, I had a small number of pupils to work over and could hope for gratifying results. Actually, with such a small cast, I achieved a cast which required but little teaching and I was able to concentrate on direction.

"Endgame" depends on an absolute minimum of lighting and sound and other special effects. The bulk of the show rests on the shoulders of actor and director. Here, again, I was free of the distracting stage effects so frequent in modern drama. I was free to concentrate on the actor and his character.

Perhaps the greatest advantage I received from directing this particular play as a thesis production was the integration it effected on my entire cultural background: theatre, linguistics, literature, philosophy, psychology. More than at any other time in my life, I felt vividly the function of theatre as an integration of all the arts and of all of man's knowledge of himself. Too many popular drawing-room comedies during the past ten years had hidden from me this function of integration.

Finally, "Endgame" was a happy choice because it was extremely difficult and my success, in any final analysis, could only be relative. Mistakes in judgement and in execution were inevitable, and from these mistakes I learned much more than from the matters in which I acheived a measure of success.

Under these conditions my thesis production served a dual purpose: it was a test of my knowledge as a directing student and it was a very effective synthesis of all that I have learned as a directing student.

FINAL HINDSIGHT CONCLUSIONS

Audience reaction to this production of "Endgame" was at least loud and strong. The economy of business and theatricality, and the measured pace the play moved in, all were effective in acheiving my initial goal: to make the spectator share vividly in the despair, torture and passion of the characters on stage. Confronted by long moments of silence, accentuated by the loud ticking of a faceless clock, the audience began to wish the torture to be over. And yet no spectator felt the play was too long or that interest lagged at any point.

I have realized, of course, that I gave the play only one of several possible interpretations. Were I to do the play again, I think that I might choose a direction diametrically opposite to the one I followed. I would make of life and man's suffering a horrible joke by producing the whole thing as a macabre Punch and Judy show. I would make the audience scream, "Surely we are of more consequence than this!"

This second interpretation would, I feel, be far more satisfying to an audience, particularly an audience of theatre folk, as was my audience at Boston University. It would demand more theatricality, more business, more dramatic brilliance. It would move at a quickening pace and would leave everyone satisfied with a "job well done".

Only one element would be missing in such a production: the sense that the world is running down, that this "something" will never end. There is no answer and we will continue forever

with no hope for an answer. And yet we will continue. For this reason, I prefer my original interpretation as more powerful in awakening in an audience the meaning of "Endgame".

I am particularly insistent that this play must consume time and that it be very even in its rythm, ebbing and flowing rather than reaching climax in brilliance.

Were I to redo the production, I would most certainly correct one major fault of staging: arena staging occasioned very poor sight lines in relation to the two ash-bins. Either Nell or Nagg were not visible to some portion of the audience at all times. The ash-bins also hid from view some of the business concerning the black dog.

This matter could best be corrected by either placing the barrels nearer the kitchen area or by raising the front row of the audience. The actors must, also, be trained in the simple arena technique of subtly swaying during a static scene, thus opening the face to a new portion of the audience, even without changing the position of his body.

Several spectators, conscious of the length of the one-act play, have asked if it would be possible to cut out, say, twenty minutes of running time without hurting the production. I think this can be done but only with extremely experienced actors. The audience must either actually experience the passage of time, or they must be made to seem to experience it. An experienced actor can, of course, make one minute appear to be ten. I could not achieve this effect with undergraduate

actors. And, of course, the play might be given a more brilliant and speeded-up production described earlier. In this case, however, the interpretation of the play is changes and, in my opinion, the play is weakened. The question is academic, at any rate. Beckett's plays were written for those willing to wait and suffer with the actors living the passion on stage. I would not make it easier on the spectator and that is the only good that would result from speeding the play.

Some have asked if the play might not be cut without suffering. Rationally it would not suffer at all since there is so much repetition and there is so much present that does not push the "action" of the play forward. Cutting would, however, destroy the rythm of the play and weaken the impact of the suffering immeasurably. I would never cut. Were I required to shorten the running time I would speed up the rythm.

This production of "Endgame" suffered particularly in two areas. I feel that it should be given more rehearsal than the average play. Lines are much more difficult to commit to memory and they carry such deep associational overtones that much more exploration is required than is usual. In addition to creating his character, to discovering and playing his action, the actor in "Endgame" must spend a great deal of time in discovering the meaning of the very words of Beckett's play. Otherwise, he will be speaking gibberish.

I also feel that my production suffered from lack of preparation in the philosophic background of the author and play.

Circumstances forced me to undertake the direction of the play without this preparation. It had to be added piecemeal during rehearsal. Luckily, I have a modest background in modern French literature and thought, including the Existentionalists, having studied for the doctorate in French Civilization. This work was, however, done over ten years ago and a whole new theatre has come alive since then. Beckett is not from the same bolt of fabric as Sartre.

Finally, I have been asked whether I would choose to do this play over. I most certainly intend to do so. My reason is not that I feel I could do it better a second time (as indeed I could) but that I cannot forget it until I have more fully understood the play's meaning. In this regard, I am thinking as spectator more than as director. This play meant most to me when I sat down with an audience to share in its meaning.

Boston University
School of Fine and Applied Arts
Division of Theatre Arts

*Graduate Thesis Production

ENDGAME

by

Samuel Beckett

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

CAST

Hamm	[illegible]
Clov	[illegible]
Nagg	[illegible]
Nell	[illegible]

PRODUCTION STAFF

[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

*[illegible]

Boston University
School of Fine and Applied Arts
Division of Theatre Arts

* Graduate Thesis Production

ENDGAME

by

Samuel Beckett

Directed by

*GORDON ARGO

November 9, 1959

CAST

Clove	Paul Cooper
Ham	Albert Sinkys
Nell	June Lewin
Nagg	Ivan Curry

PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager	Judith Abbott
Settings and Costumes by	Marilyn Dexheimer
Lighting by	Richard Van Deusen

TECHNICAL STAFF

Christopher Marsh, David Levenson, Louis Ponderosa, Alan Gordon, Elinor Schectman, Bonnie Black, Beth Kaplan, Sheila Menaker, Anne Morris, Mylo Quam

*As partial fulfillment for the Master of Fine Arts degree requirements

For Roger Blin

Endgame

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

Consider use of origanal title "Fin de Partie", partie offering greater insight into theme

No! Play is in no wise French in nature French title would mis-lead

THE CHARACTERS:

NAGG
NELL
HAMM
CLOV

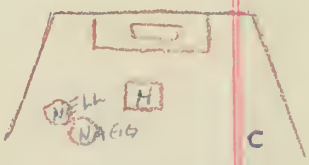
Consider the juxtaposition of Hamm and Clovis (slave and King)

Hamm – Noah's son who saw his nakedness and was banished.

Clovis – Gallic-Teuton ruler (Frank), converted Christian, exercised extraordinary patience in achieving his goals.

Nell, Nagg } names reminiscent of English Punch and Judy show (pictured arms and head above ash-cans).

Bare interior.
Grey light.
Left and right back, high up, two small windows, curtains drawn.
Front right, a door. Hanging near door, its face to wall, a picture. (cut the picture)
Front left, touching each other, covered with an old sheet, two ashbins.
Center, in an armchair on castors, covered with an old sheet, Hamm.
Motionless by the door, his eyes fixed on Hamm, Clov. Very red face.
Brief tableau.



begin Clov's beat

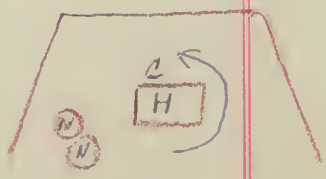
Clov goes and stands under window left. Stiff, staggering walk. He looks up at window left. He turns and looks at window right. He goes and stands under window right. He looks up at window right. He turns and looks at window left. He goes out, comes back immediately with a small step-ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window left, gets up on it, draws back curtain. He gets down, takes six steps (for example) towards window right, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window right, gets up on it, draws back curtain. He gets down, takes three steps towards window left, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window left, gets up on it, looks out of window. Brief laugh. He gets down, takes one step towards window right, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window right, gets up on it, looks out of window. Brief laugh. He gets down, goes with ladder towards ashbins, halts, turns, carries back ladder and sets it down under window right, goes to ashbins, removes sheet covering them, folds it over his arm. He raises one lid, stoops and looks into bin. Brief laugh. He closes lid. Same with other bin. He goes to Hamm, removes sheet covering him, folds it over his arm. In a dressing-gown, a stiff toque on his head, a large blood-stained handkerchief over his face, a whistle hanging from his neck, a rug over his knees, thick socks on his feet, Hamm seems to be asleep. Clov looks him over. Brief laugh. He goes to door, halts, turns towards auditorium.

Throughout, actions are performed exactly as noted in Beckett's script.

Clov performs an age old ritual, beginning very slowly, gaining momentum until completion — then stop! and survey. Try to understand the meaning of this repeated ritual.

[Sound of sick]

CLOV *(fixed gaze, tonelessly)*:
Finished, it's finished, nearly finished, it must be nearly finished.
(Pause.)
Grain upon grain, one by one, and one day, suddenly, there's a heap, a little heap, the impossible heap.
(Pause.)
I can't be punished any more. (resignation, not optimism)



The alarm clock without hands falls, from the moment the actor enters the hall until the final curtain

(Pause.)

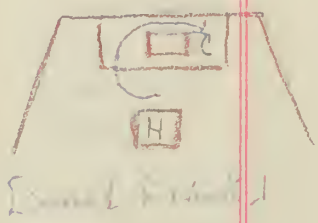
I'll go now to my kitchen, ten feet by ten feet by ten feet, and wait for him to whistle me. (mysterious recognition of what he will inevitably do).

(Pause.)

Nice dimensions, nice proportions, I'll lean on the table, and look at the wall, and wait for him to whistle me.

end of beat for Clov.

(He remains a moment motionless, then goes out. He comes back immediately, goes to window right, takes up the ladder and carries it out. Pause. Hamm stirs. He yawns under the handkerchief. He removes the handkerchief from his face. Very red face. Black glasses.)



begin Hamm's beat

HAMM:

Me—

(he yawns)

—to play.

(He holds the handkerchief spread out before him.)

Old stancher!

(He takes off his glasses, wipes his eyes, his face, the glasses, puts them on again, folds the handkerchief and puts it back neatly in the breast-pocket of his dressing-gown. He clears his throat, joins the tips of his fingers.)

Blind Hamm early in rehearsals to contribution to relating to others by sound rather than by sight

Can there be misery— (every-thing but the spray treatment of Pozzo)

(he yawns)

—loftier than mine? No doubt. Formerly. But now?

(Pause.)

My father? (gesture)

(Pause.)

My mother? (gesture)

(Pause.)

My . . . dog? (gesture to missing dog)

(Pause.)

Oh I am willing to believe they suffer as much as such creatures can suffer. But does that mean their sufferings equal mine? No doubt. (The let-down of realism.)

Ham awakens to the game of life, in full swing. Compare lines to those of Hamlet, or to any tragic hero

(Pause.)

No, all is a—

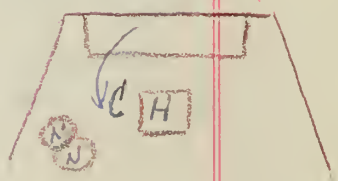
(he yawns)

—bsolute,

(proudly)

the bigger a man is the fuller he is. (the build-up)
(Pause. Gloomily.)
And the emptier. (the let-down)
(He sniffs.)
Clov!
(Pause.)
No, alone. ("Now. I am alone!")
(Pause.)
What dreams! Those forests!
(Pause.)
Enough, it's time it ended, in the shelter too.
(Pause.)
And yet I hesitate, I hesitate to . . . to end. Yes, there it is, it's time it ended and yet I hesitate to— ("To be or not to be.")
(he yawns)
—to end.
(Yawns.)
End of beat for Hamm
God, I'm tired, I'd be better off in bed.
(He whistles. Enter Clov immediately. He halts beside the chair.)
You pollute the air! (Hamm recognizes Clov's presence by sense of odor.)
(Pause.)
Get me ready, I'm going to bed.

How grand one may be alone! Alone, we are someone!



CLOV:
I've just got you up.
HAMM:
And what of it?
CLOV:
I can't be getting you up and putting you to bed every five minutes, I have things to do.
(Pause.)
HAMM:
Did you ever see my eyes? conversation? the "game"?
CLOV:
No.
HAMM:
Did you never have the curiosity, while I was sleeping, to take off my glasses and look at my eyes?

The day (or hour) begins anew.

CLOV:
Pulling back the lids? (repulsion)
(Pause.)
No.

HAMM:
One of these days I'll show them to you. (generous)
(Pause.)
It seems they've gone all white. (Moby Dick, the albino, the shroud, death)
(Pause.)
What time is it?

CLOV:
The same as usual.

HAMM *(gesture towards window right)*:
Have you looked?

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM:
Well?

CLOV:
Zero.

HAMM:
It'd need to rain.

CLOV:
It won't rain.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Apart from that, how do you feel?

CLOV:
I don't complain.

HAMM:
You feel normal?

CLOV *(irritably)*:
I tell you I don't complain.

HAMM:
I feel a little queer.
(Pause.)

We must take this to a and someday make something of it. Such is the stuff of life.

end of beat

Hamm pauses and readjusts, unable to escape longer the longing for an end

New beat

Clov!

CLOV:

Yes.

HAMM:

Have you not had enough? (I have, have you?)

CLOV:

Yes!

(Pause.)

Of what? (he understood the first time.)

HAMM:

Of this . . . this . . . thing. (search! it has no name)

CLOV:

I always had.

(Pause.)

Not you?

HAMM *(gloomily)*:

Then there's no reason for it to change.

CLOV:

It may end. (Hope!)

(Pause.)

All life long the same questions, the same answers.

HAMM:

New beat

Get me ready.

(Clov does not move.)

Go and get the sheet.

(Clov does not move.)

Clov!

CLOV:

Yes.

HAMM:

I'll give you nothing more to eat. (threat)

CLOV:

Then we'll die. (Hope!)

HAMM:

I'll give you just enough to keep you from dying. You'll be hungry all the time. (greater threat!)

– Shall we be realistic and brave and ask the question?

– There is no answer.

– Let's hide!

we are well hidden in these quests for comfort and rest.

CLOV:
Then we won't die. (Despair)
(Pause.)
I'll go and get the sheet.
(He goes towards the door.)

HAMM:
No!
(Clov halts.)
I'll give you one biscuit per day.
(Pause.)
One and a half. (to torture)
(Pause.)
Why do you stay with me? (when I torture you so)

CLOV:
Why do you keep me?

HAMM:
There's no one else.

CLOV:
There's nowhere else.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
You're leaving me all the same.

CLOV:
I'm trying.

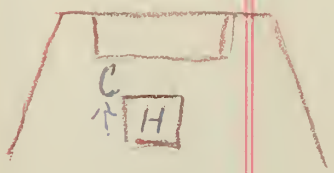
HAMM:
You don't love me.

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
You loved me once.

CLOV:
Once!

HAMM:
I've made you suffer too much. (rather pleased)
(Pause.)
Haven't I? (sure of it)



Let's play at "King and slave", I'll be King.

CLOV:
It's not that.

HAMM *(shocked)*:
I haven't made you suffer too much? (I've been a bad King?)

CLOV:
Yes!

HAMM *(relieved)*:
Ah you gave me a fright!
(Pause. Coldly.)
Forgive me. (Noblesse oblige)
(Pause. Louder.)
I said, Forgive me.

CLOV:
I heard you. (but no forgiveness)
(Pause.) — recant —
Have you bled? (rather a bit of concern)

HAMM:
Less.
(Pause.)
Is it not time for my pain-killer? (in French "calmant")

CLOV:
No.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
How are your eyes? (sudden interest — a trick? the game?)

CLOV:
Bad.

HAMM:
How are your legs?

CLOV:
Bad.

HAMM:
But you can move.

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM *(violently)*: (the capper!)
Then move!
(Clov goes to back wall, leans against it with his forehead and hands.)
Where are you?

CLOV:
Here.

HAMM:
Come back!
(Clov returns to his place beside the chair.)
Where are you?

CLOV:
Here.

HAMM:
Why don't you kill me? (seriously! please!)

CLOV:
I don't know the combination of the cupboard.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Go and get two bicycle-wheels.

CLOV:
There are no more bicycle-wheels.

HAMM:
What have you done with your bicycle?

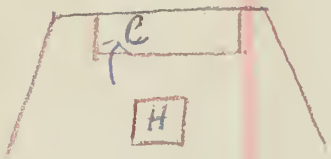
CLOV:
I never had a bicycle.

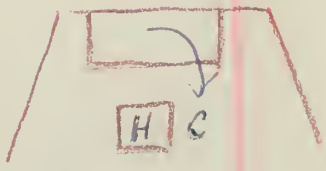
HAMM:
The thing is impossible.

CLOV:
When there were still bicycles I wept to have one. I crawled at your feet. You told me to go to hell. Now there are none.

HAMM:
And your rounds? When you inspected my paupers. Always on foot? ↑ the ruler the beneficent one!

CLOV:
Sometimes on horse.
(The lid of one of the bins lifts and the hands of Nagg appear, gripping





the rim. Then his head emerges. Nightcap. Very white face. Nagg yawns, then listens.)

I'll leave you, I have things to do.

HAMM:

In your kitchen?

CLOV:

Yes.

HAMM:

Outside of here it's death. (drive carefully! don't do anything foolish)

(Pause.)

All right, be off. (here are the car keys)

end of beat

(Exit Clov. Pause.)

We're getting on. (pleased to have done away with a bit of time)

NAGG:

Me pap! (Wahhh!!!)

pap = pablum (papa?)

HAMM:

Accursed progenitor! (why did you engender me that I should suffer?)

NAGG:

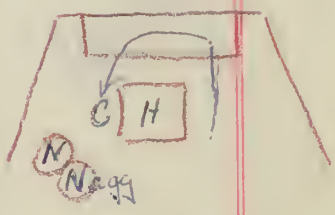
Me pap!

HAMM:

The old folks at home! No decency left! Guzzle, guzzle, that's all they think of.

(He whistles. Enter Clov. He halts beside the chair.)

Well! I thought you were leaving me. (taunt him)



CLOV:

Oh not just yet, not just yet. (taunt him back)

NAGG:

Me pap!

HAMM:

Give him his pap.

CLOV:

There's no more pap.

HAMM *(to Nagg)*:

Do you hear that? There's no more pap. You'll never get any more pap. (torture him)

NAGG:
I want me pap!

HAMM:
Give him a biscuit.
(Exit Clov.)
Accursed fornicator! How are your stumps?

stumps of legs

NAGG:
Never mind me stumps.
(Enter Clov with biscuit.)

CLOV:
I'm back again, with the biscuit.
(He gives biscuit to Nagg who fingers it, sniffs it.)

biscuit - use ordinary soda cracker

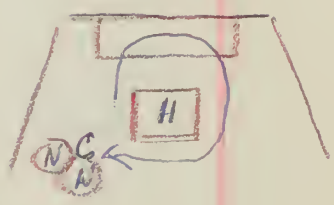
NAGG *(plaintively)*:
What is it?

CLOV:
Spratt's medium.

NAGG *(as before)*:
It's hard! I can't!

end of beat

HAMM:
Bottle him!
(Clov pushes Nagg back into the bin, closes the lid.) (as Jack-in-box hand on head)

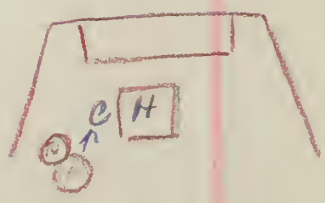


CLOV *(returning to his place beside the chair)*:
If age but knew! (this younger generation!)

HAMM:
Sit on him!

CLOV:
I can't sit.

HAMM:
True. And I can't stand.



CLOV:
So it is.

HAMM:
Every man his speciality. the game! —
(Pause.)
No phone calls? time flies! —

(Pause.)
Don't we laugh? (I thought it was pretty good)

CLOV *(after reflection)*:
I don't feel like it.

HAMM *(after reflection)*:
Nor I. (I try and try but you wont play. Now we must face the question)
(Pause.)
Clov!

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM:
Nature has forgotten us.

CLOV:
There's no more nature.

HAMM:
No more nature! You exaggerate. (silly boy)(still we can avoid the question)

CLOV:
In the vicinity.

HAMM:
But we breathe, we change! We lose our hair, our teeth! Our bloom! Our ideals!

CLOV:
Then she hasn't forgotten us. (have it your way)

HAMM:
But you say there is none. (Ah! I caught you)

CLOV *(sadly)*:
No one that ever lived ever thought so crooked as we.

HAMM:
We do what we can.

CLOV:
We shouldn't.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
You're a bit of all right, aren't you?

Face to face, they must either play the game or face the question. Verbal gymnastics help them to escape.

CLOV:
A smithereen.
(Pause.)
HAMM:
This is slow work.
(Pause.)
Is it not time for my pain-killer?
CLOV:
No.
(Pause.)
I'll leave you, I have things to do. do not move
HAMM:
In your kitchen?
CLOV:
Yes.
HAMM:
What, I'd like to know. (great interest - he cannot see Kitchen)
CLOV:
I look at the wall.
HAMM:
The wall! And what do you see on your wall? Mene, mene? Naked bodies?
CLOV:
I see my light dying.
HAMM:
Your light dying! Listen to that! Well, it can die just as well here, *your* light. Take a look at me and then come back and tell me what you think of *your* light. (I am the King)
(Pause.)
CLOV:
You shouldn't speak to me like that.
(Pause.)
HAMM *(coldly)*:
Forgive me. (noblesse oblige)
(Pause. Louder.)
I said, Forgive me.

The game grows hard. Perhaps a drink?

Mene, mene = the handwriting on the wall. "Thou hast been weighed in the balance and found wanting."

Note repetition of forgiveness scene.

CLOV:
I heard you. (but no forgiveness)
(The lid of Nagg's bin lifts. His hands appear, gripping the rim. Then his head emerges. In his mouth the biscuit. He listens.)

HAMM:
Did your seeds come up? to humour him?

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
Did you scratch round them to see if they had sprouted?

CLOV:
They haven't sprouted. growing anger

HAMM:
Perhaps it's still too early.

CLOV:
If they were going to sprout they would have sprouted.
(Violently.)
They'll never sprout!
(Pause. Nagg takes biscuit in his hand.)

end of beat

HAMM:
This is not much fun.
(Pause.)
But that's always the way at the end of the day, isn't it, Clov?

CLOV: We must play!
Always.

HAMM:
It's the end of the day like any other day, isn't it, Clov?

CLOV: all is alright?
Looks like it.
(Pause.)

HAMM *(anguished)*:
What's happening, what's happening?

CLOV:
Something is taking its course.
(Pause.)

Note that Clov seems more controlled than Hamm.

why seeds?

and we are back to the great question.

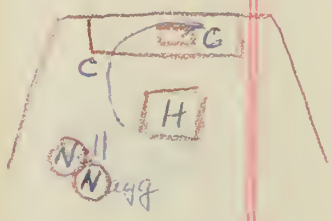
The crux of the play — the great question which can be avoided only by means thereof

HAMM:
All right, be off.
(He leans back in his chair, remains motionless. Clov does not move, heaves a great groaning sigh. Hamm sits up.)
I thought I told you to be off.

CLOV:
I'm trying.
(He goes to door, halts.)
Ever since I was whelped.
(Exit Clov.)

end of beat

HAMM:
We're getting on. (Time passes)
(He leans back in his chair, remains motionless. Nagg knocks on the lid of the other bin. Pause. He knocks harder. The lid lifts and the hands of Nell appear, gripping the rim. Then her head emerges. Lace cap. Very white face.)



NELL:
What is it, my pet?
(Pause.)
Time for love? (French: "c'est pour la bagatelle"?)

NAGG:
Were you asleep?

NELL:
Oh no! (of course I was)

NAGG:
Kiss me.

NELL:
We can't.

NAGG:
Try.
(Their heads strain towards each other, fail to meet, fall apart again.)

end of beat

NELL:
Why this farce, day after day? // (why must we torture ourselves?)
(Pause.)

NAGG:
I've lost me tooth.

Nell wants to avoid the unpleasant realities of life by vegetating – no consciousness, no memories

(Nagg voices again. He must have company)

NELL:
When?

NAGG:
I had it yesterday.

NELL *(elegiac)*:
Ah yesterday!
(They turn painfully towards each other.)

NAGG:
Can you see me?

NELL:
Hardly. And you?

They review their situation.

NAGG:
What?

NELL:
Can you see me?

NAGG:
Hardly.

NELL:
So much the better, so much the better. (in our present state of ugliness)

NAGG:
Don't say that.
(Pause.)
Our sight has failed.

NELL:
Yes.
(Pause. They turn away from each other.)

NAGG:
Can you hear me?

NELL:
Yes. And you?

NAGG:
Yes.
(Pause.)
Our hearing hasn't failed.

NELL:
Our what?

NAGG:
Our hearing.

end of beat

NELL:
No.
(Pause.)
Have you anything else to say to me? (Hoping not)

NAGG:
Do you remember—

NELL:
No. (quickly — to avoid pain of remembering)

NAGG:
When we crashed on our tandem and lost our shanks.
(They laugh heartily.)

NELL:
It was in the Ardennes.
(They laugh less heartily.)

end of beat

NAGG:
On the road to Sedan.
(They laugh still less heartily.)
Are you cold?

Discomfort made more pressing by memory of better days.

NELL:
Yes, perished. And you?

NAGG:
(Pause.)
I'm freezing.
(Pause.)
Do you want to go in?

NELL:
Yes.

NAGG:
Then go in.
(Nell does not move)
Why don't you go in?

NELL:
I don't know.
(Pause.)

NAGG:
Has he changed your sawdust? (trying to peer into her bin)

NELL:
It isn't sawdust.
(Pause. Wearily.)
Can you not be a little accurate, Nagg?

NAGG:
Your sand then. It's not important.

NELL:
It is important.
(Pause.)

NAGG:
It was sawdust once.

NELL:
Once!

NAGG:
And now it's sand.
(Pause.)
From the shore.
(Pause. Impatiently.)
Now it's sand he fetches from the shore.

NELL:
Now it's sand.

NAGG:
Has he changed yours?

NELL:
No.

NAGG:
Nor mine.
(Pause.)
I won't have it! (disappears into bin)
(Pause. Holding up the biscuit.) (re-appears)
Do you want a bit?

NELL:
No.

(Pause.)
Of what?

NAGG:
Biscuit. I've kept you half.
(He looks at the biscuit. Proudly.)
Three quarters. For you. Here.
(He proffers the biscuit.)
No? (real concern)
(Pause.)
Do you not feel well?

end of beat

HAMM *(wearily)*:
Quiet, quiet, you're keeping me awake.
(Pause.)
Talk softer.
(Pause.)
If I could sleep I might make love. I'd go into the woods. My eyes would see . . . the sky, the earth. I'd run, run, they wouldn't catch me. (to himself from out a dream)
(Pause.)
Nature!
(Pause.)
There's something dripping in my head.
(Pause.)
A heart, a heart in my head. unhappiness —
(Pause.)

remember his blindness — his paralysis.

who is "they"?

what is "heart"?

NAGG *(soft)*:
Do you hear him? A heart in his head!
(He chuckles cautiously.)

NELL:
One mustn't laugh at those things, Nagg. Why must you always laugh at them? scolding!

NAGG:
Not so loud!

NELL *(without lowering her voice)*:
Nothing is funnier than unhappiness, I grant you that. But—

NAGG *(shocked)*:
Oh!

NELL:
Yes, yes, it's the most comical thing in the world. And we laugh, we laugh, with a will, in the beginning. But it's always the same thing. Yes, it's like the funny story we have heard too often, we still find it funny, but we don't laugh any more.
(Pause.)
Have you anything else to say to me?

NAGG:
No.

NELL:
Are you quite sure?
(Pause.)
Then I'll leave you.

NAGG:
Do you not want your biscuit?
(Pause.)
I'll keep it for you.
(Pause.)
I thought you were going to leave me.

NELL:
I am going to leave you.

NAGG:
Could you give me a scratch before you go?

NELL:
No.
(Pause.)
Where?

NAGG:
In the back.

NELL:
No.
(Pause.)
Rub yourself against the rim.

NAGG:
It's lower down. In the hollow.

NELL:
What hollow?

NAGG:
The hollow!
(Pause.)
Could you not?
(Pause.)
Yesterday you scratched me there.

NELL *(elegiac)*:
Ah yesterday!

NAGG:
Could you not?
(Pause.)
Would you like me to scratch you?
(Pause.)
Are you crying again?

NELL:
I was trying.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Perhaps it's a little vein. (heart in the head)
(Pause.)

NAGG:
What was that he said?

NELL:
Perhaps it's a little vein.

NAGG:
What does that mean?
(Pause.)
That means nothing.
(Pause.)
Will I tell you the story of the tailor?

to keep her there
to converse
to lessen the
waiting

NELL:
No.
(Pause.)
What for?

NAGG:
To cheer you up.

NELL:
It's not funny.

NAGG:
It always made you laugh. hurt
(Pause.)
The first time I thought you'd die. laughing to himself

NELL:
It was on Lake Como. caught up in the memory — pain ahead!
(Pause.)
One April afternoon.
(Pause.)
Can you believe it?

NAGG:
What?

NELL:
That we once went out rowing on Lake Como.
(Pause.)
One April afternoon.

NAGG:
We had got engaged the day before.

NELL:
Engaged!

NAGG:
You were in such fits that we capsized. By rights we should have been drowned.

NELL:
It was because I felt happy.

NAGG *(indignant)*: (the idea!)
It was not, it was not, it was my story and nothing else. Happy!
Don't you laugh at it still? Every time I tell it. Happy!

NELL:
It was deep, deep. And you could see down to the bottom.
So white. So clean. (soft, soft voice – she is playing out)

NAGG:

Let me tell it again.

(Raconteur's voice.)

An Englishman, needing a pair of striped trousers in a hurry for the New Year festivities, goes to his tailor who takes his measurements.

(Tailor's voice.)

"That's the lot, come back in four days, I'll have it ready." Good. Four days later.

(Tailor's voice.)

"So sorry, come back in a week, I've made a mess of the seat." Good, that's all right, a neat seat can be very ticklish. A week later.

(Taiior's voice.)

"Frightfully sorry, come back in ten days, I've made a hash of the crotch." Good, can't be helped, a snug crotch is always a teaser. Ten days later.

(Tailor's voice.)

"Dreadfully sorry, come back in a fortnight, I've made a balls of the fly." Good, at a pinch, a smart fly is a stiff proposition.

(Pause. Normal voice.)

I never told it worse.

(Pause. Gloomy.)

I tell this story worse and worse.

(Pause. Raconteur's voice.)

Well, to make it short, the bluebells are blowing and he ballockses the buttonholes.

(Customer's voice.)

"God damn you to hell, Sir, no, it's indecent, there are limits! In six days, do you hear me, six days, God made the world. Yes Sir, no less Sir, the WORLD! And you are not bloody well capable of making me a pair of trousers in three months!"

(Tailor's voice, scandalized.)

"But my dear Sir, my dear Sir, look—

(disdainful gesture, disgustedly)

—at the world—

(pause)

Nagg shares this speech with a large unseen audience over the entire room. He does not, however communicate with our audience. Things do not go presentational.

and look—
(loving gesture, proudly)
—at my TROUSERS!"
(Pause. He looks at Nell who has remained impassive, her eyes unseeing, breaks into a high forced laugh, cuts it short, pokes his head towards Nell, launches his laugh again.)

end of beat

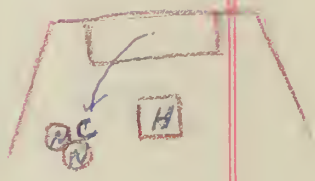
HAMM:
Silence!
(Nagg starts, cuts short his laugh.)

NELL:
You could see down to the bottom. (dream – she is dying)

HAMM *(exasperated)*:
Have you not finished? Will you never finish?
(With sudden fury.)
Will this never finish? (real passion)
(Nagg disappears into his bin, closes the lid behind him. Nell does not move. Frenziedly.)
My kingdom for a nightman!
(He whistles. Enter Clov.)
Clear away this muck! Chuck it in the sea! (his ma + pa!)
(Clov goes to bins, halts.)

Hamm erupts from his dream and discovers reality. Nell is escaping

NELL:
So white.

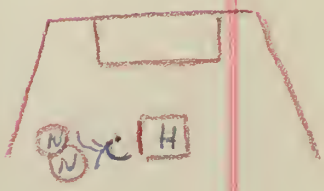


HAMM:
What? What's she blathering about?
(Clov stoops, takes Nell's hand, feels her pulse.)

NELL *(to Clov)*:
Desert! (white, clear sand) (very soft, she dies)
(Clov lets go her hand, pushes her back in the bin, closes the lid.)

CLOV *(returning to his place beside the chair)*:
She has no pulse.

HAMM: She's a great one for that! ← add this line from French version.
What was she drivelling about?



CLOV:
She told me to go away, into the desert.

HAMM:
Damn busybody! Is that all?

Hamm is panicked and infuriated by the return to reality.

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
What else?

CLOV:
I didn't understand.

HAMM:
Have you bottled her?

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM:
Are they both bottled?

CLOV:
Yes.

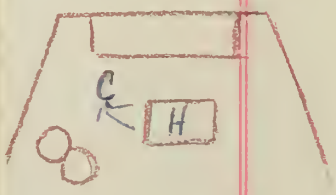
HAMM:
Screw down the lids.
(Clov goes towards door.) (he moves to bins)
Time enough.
(Clov halts.)
My anger subsides, I'd like to pee.

CLOV *(with alacrity)*:
I'll go and get the catheter.
(He goes towards door.)

HAMM:
Time enough.
(Clov halts.)
Give me my pain-killer.

CLOV:
It's too soon.
(Pause.)
It's too soon on top of your tonic, it wouldn't act.

HAMM:
In the morning they brace you up and in the evening they calm you down. Unless it's the other way round.
(Pause.)
That old doctor, he's dead naturally? (brought on by the medical references: catheter and pain-killer)



CLOV:
He wasn't old.

HAMM:
But he's dead?

CLOV:
Naturally.
(Pause.)
You ask *me* that?
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Take me for a little turn.
(Clov goes behind the chair and pushes it forward.)
Not too fast!
(Clov pushes chair.)
Right round the world!
(Clov pushes chair.)
Hug the walls, then back to the center again.
(Clov pushes chair.)
I was right in the center, wasn't I?

CLOV *(pushing)*:
Yes.

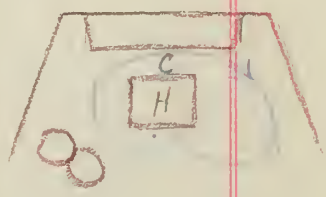
HAMM:
We'd need a proper wheel-chair. With big wheels. Bicycle wheels!
(Pause.)
Are you hugging?

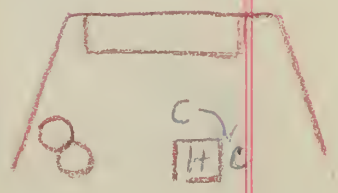
CLOV *(pushing)*:
Yes.

HAMM *(groping for wall)*:
It's a lie! Why do you lie to me?

CLOV *(bearing closer to wall)*:
There! There!

HAMM:
Stop!
(Clov stops chair close to back wall. Hamm lays his hand against wall.)
Old wall!





(Pause.)
Beyond is the . . . other hell.
(Pause. Violently.)
Closer! Closer! Up against!

CLOV:
Take away your hand.
(Hamm withdraws his hand. Clov rams chair against wall.)
There!
(Hamm leans towards wall, applies his ear to it.)

HAMM:
Do you hear?
(He strikes the wall with his knuckles.)
Do you hear? Hollow bricks!
(He strikes again.)
All that's hollow!
(Pause. He straightens up. Violently.)
That's enough. Back!

CLOV:
We haven't done the round.

HAMM:
Back to my place!
(Clov pushes chair back to center.)
Is that my place?

CLOV:
Yes, that's your place.

HAMM:
Am I right in the center?

CLOV:
I'll measure it.

HAMM:
More or less! More or less!

CLOV *(moving chair slightly)*:
There!

HAMM:
I'm more or less in the center?

CLOV:
I'd say so.

HAMM:
You'd say so! Put me right in the center!

CLOV:
I'll go and get the tape.

HAMM:
Roughly! Roughly!
(Clov moves chair slightly.)
Bang in the center!

CLOV:
There!
(Pause.)

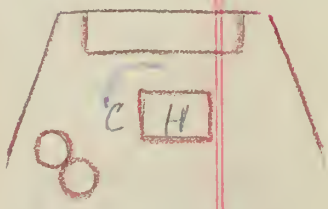
HAMM:
I feel a little too far to the left.
(Clov moves chair slightly.)
Now I feel a little too far to the right.
(Clov moves chair slightly.)
I feel a little too far forward.
(Clov moves chair slightly.)
Now I feel a little too far back.
(Clov moves chair slightly.)
Don't stay there,
(i.e. behind the chair).
you give me the shivers.
(Clov returns to his place beside the chair.)

CLOV:
If I could kill him I'd die happy.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
What's the weather like?

CLOV:
As usual.

HAMM:
Look at the earth.



CLOV:
I've looked.

HAMM:
With the glass?

CLOV:
No need of the glass.

HAMM:
Look at it with the glass.

CLOV:
I'll go and get the glass.
(Exit Clov.)

HAMM:
No need of the glass!
(Enter Clov with telescope.)

CLOV:
I'm back again, with the glass.
(He goes to window right, looks up at it.)
I need the steps.

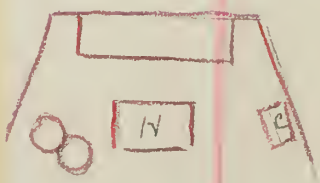
HAMM:
Why? Have you shrunk?
(Exit Clov with telescope.)
I don't like that, I don't like that.
(Enter Clov with ladder, but without telescope.)

CLOV:
I'm back again, with the steps.
(He sets down ladder under window right, gets up on it, realizes he has not the telescope, gets down.)
I need the glass.
(He goes towards door.)

HAMM *(violently)*:
But you have the glass!

CLOV *(halting, violently)*:
No, I haven't the glass!
(Exit Clov.)

HAMM:
This is deadly.



(Enter Clov with telescope. He goes towards ladder.)

CLOV:
Things are livening up.
(He gets up on ladder, raises the telescope, lets it fall.)
I did it on purpose.
(He gets down, picks up the telescope, turns it on auditorium.)
I see . . . a multitude . . . in transports . . . of joy.
(Pause.)
That's what I call a magnifier.
(He lowers the telescope, turns towards Hamm.)
Well? Don't we laugh?

HAMM *(after reflection)*:
I don't.

CLOV *(after reflection)*:
Nor I.
(He gets up on ladder, turns the telescope on the without.)
Let's see.
(He looks, moving the telescope.)
Zero . . .
(he looks)
. . . zero . . .
(he looks)
. . . and zero.

HAMM:
Nothing stirs. All is—

CLOV:
Zer—

HAMM *(violently)*:
Wait till you're spoken to!
(Normal voice.)
All is . . . all is . . . all is what?
(Violently.)
All is what?

CLOV:
What all is? In a word? Is that what you want to know? Just a moment.

(He turns the telescope on the without, looks, lowers the telescope, turns towards Hamm.)

Corpsed.

(Pause.)

Well? Content?

HAMM:

Look at the sea.

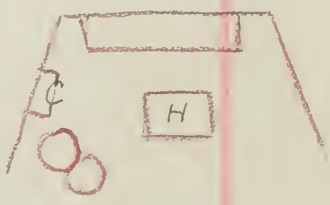
CLOV:

It's the same.

HAMM:

Look at the ocean!

(Clov gets down, takes a few steps towards window left, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window left, gets up on it, turns the telescope on the without, looks at length. He starts, lowers the telescope, examines it, turns it again on the without.)



CLOV:

Never seen anything like that!

HAMM *(anxious)*:

What? A sail? A fin? Smoke?

CLOV *(looking)*:

The light is sunk.

HAMM *(relieved)*:

Pah! We all knew that.

CLOV *(looking)*:

There was a bit left.

HAMM:

The base.

CLOV *(looking)*:

Yes.

HAMM:

And now?

CLOV *(looking)*:

All gone.

HAMM:

No gulls?

CLOV *(looking)*:
Gulls!

HAMM:
And the horizon? Nothing on the horizon?

CLOV *(lowering the telescope, turning towards Hamm, exasperated)*:
What in God's name could there be on the horizon?
(Pause.)

HAMM:
The waves, how are the waves?

CLOV:
The waves?
(He turns the telescope on the waves.)
Lead.

HAMM:
And the sun?

CLOV *(looking)*:
Zero.

HAMM:
But it should be sinking. Look again.

CLOV *(looking)*:
Damn the sun.

HAMM:
Is it night already then?

CLOV *(looking)*:
No.

HAMM:
Then what is it?

CLOV *(looking)*:
Gray.
(Lowering the telescope, turning towards Hamm, louder.)
Gray!
(Pause. Still louder.)
GRRAY!
(Pause. He gets down, approaches Hamm from behind, whispers in his ear.)

HAMM *(starting)*:
Gray! Did I hear you say gray?

CLOV:
Light black. From pole to pole.

HAMM:
You exaggerate.
(Pause.)
Don't stay there, you give me the shivers.
(Clov returns to his place beside the chair.)

CLOV:
Why this farce, day after day?

HAMM:
Routine. One never knows.
(Pause.)
Last night I saw inside my breast. There was a big sore.

CLOV:
Pah! You saw your heart.

HAMM:
No, it was living.
(Pause. Anquished.)
Clov!

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM:
What's happening?

CLOV:
Something is taking its course.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Clov!

CLOV *(impatiently)*:
What is it?

HAMM:
We're not beginning to . . . to . . . mean something?

CLOV:
Mean something! You and I, mean something!
(Brief laugh.)
Ah that's a good one!

HAMM:
I wonder.
(Pause.)
Imagine if a rational being came back to earth, wouldn't he be liable to get ideas into his head if he observed us long enough.
(Voice of rational being.)
Ah, good, now I see what it is, yes, now I understand what they're at!
(Clov starts, drops the telescope and begins to scratch his belly with both hands. Normal voice.)
And without going so far as that, we ourselves . . .
(with emotion)
. . . we ourselves . . . at certain moments . . .
(Vehemently.)
To think perhaps it won't all have been for nothing!

CLOV *(anguished, scratching himself)*:
I have a flea!

HAMM:
A flea! Are there still fleas?

CLOV:
On me there's one.
(Scratching.)
Unless it's a crablouse.

HAMM *(very perturbed)*:
But humanity might start from there all over again! Catch him, for the love of God!

CLOV:
I'll go and get the powder.
(Exit Clov.)

HAMM:
A flea! This is awful! What a day!

(Enter Clov with a sprinkling-tin.)

CLOV:
I'm back again, with the insecticide.

HAMM:
Let him have it!
(Clov loosens the top of his trousers, pulls it forward and shakes powder into the aperture. He stoops, looks, waits, starts, frenziedly shakes more powder, stoops, looks, waits.)

CLOV:
The bastard!

HAMM:
Did you get him?

CLOV:
Looks like it.
(He drops the tin and adjusts his trousers.)
Unless he's laying doggo.

HAMM:
Laying! Lying you mean. Unless he's *lying* doggo.

CLOV:
Ah? One says lying? One doesn't say laying?

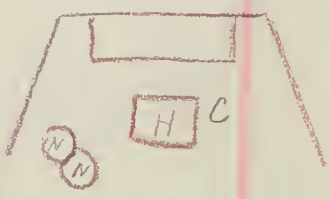
HAMM:
Use your head, can't you. If he was laying we'd be bitched.

CLOV:
Ah.
(Pause.)
What about that pee?

HAMM:
I'm having it.

CLOV:
Ah that's the spirit, that's the spirit!
(Pause.)

HAMM *(with ardour)*:
Let's go from here, the two of us! South! You can make a raft and the currents will carry us away, far away, to other . . . mammals!



CLOV:
God forbid!

HAMM:
Alone, I'll embark alone! Get working on that raft immediately. Tomorrow I'll be gone for ever.

CLOV *(hastening towards door)*:
I'll start straight away.

HAMM:
Wait!
(Clov halts.)
Will there be sharks, do you think?

CLOV:
Sharks? I don't know. If there are there will be.
(He goes towards door.)

HAMM:
Wait!
(Clov halts.)
Is it not yet time for my pain-killer?

CLOV *(violently)*:
No!
(He goes towards door.)

HAMM:
Wait!
(Clov halts.)
How are your eyes?

CLOV:
Bad.

HAMM:
But you can see.

CLOV:
All I want.

HAMM:
How are your legs?

CLOV:
Bad.

HAMM:
But you can walk.

CLOV:
I come . . . and go.

HAMM:
In my house.
(Pause. With prophetic relish.)
One day you'll be blind, like me. You'll be sitting there, a speck in the void, in the dark, for ever, like me.
(Pause.)
One day you'll say to yourself, I'm tired, I'll sit down, and you'll go and sit down. Then you'll say, I'm hungry, I'll get up and get something to eat. But you won't get up. You'll say, I shouldn't have sat down, but since I have I'll sit on a little longer, then I'll get up and get something to eat. But you won't get up and you won't get anything to eat.
(Pause.)
You'll look at the wall a while, then you'll say, I'll close my eyes, perhaps have a little sleep, after that I'll feel better, and you'll close them. And when you open them again there'll be no wall any more.
(Pause.)
Infinite emptiness will be all around you, all the resurrected dead of all the ages wouldn't fill it, and there you'll be like a little bit of grit in the middle of the steppe.
(Pause.)
Yes, one day you'll know what it is, you'll be like me, except that you won't have anyone with you, because you won't have had pity on anyone and because there won't be anyone left to have pity on.
(Pause.)

CLOV:
It's not certain.
(Pause.)
And there's one thing you forget.

HAMM:
Ah?

CLOV:
I can't sit down.

HAMM *(impatiently)*:
Well you'll lie down then, what the hell! Or you'll come to a standstill, simply stop and stand still, the way you are now. One day you'll say, I'm tired, I'll stop. What does the attitude matter?
(Pause.)

CLOV:
So you all want me to leave you.

HAMM:
Naturally.

CLOV:
Then I'll leave you.

HAMM:
You can't leave us.

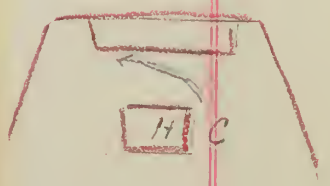
CLOV:
Then I won't leave you.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Why don't you finish us?
(Pause.)
I'll tell you the combination of the cupboard if you promise to finish me.

CLOV:
I couldn't finish you.

HAMM:
Then you won't finish me.
(Pause.)

CLOV:
I'll leave you, I have things to do.



HAMM:
Do you remember when you came here?

CLOV:
No. Too small, you told me.

HAMM:
Do you remember your father.

CLOV *(wearily)*:
Same answer.
(Pause.)
You've asked me these questions millions of times.

HAMM:
I love the old questions.
(With fervour.)
Ah the old questions, the old answers, there's nothing like them!
(Pause.)
It was I was a father to you.

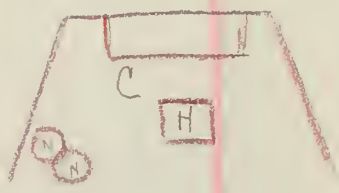
CLOV:
Yes.
(He looks at Hamm fixedly.)
You were that to me.

HAMM:
My house a home for you.

CLOV:
Yes.
(He looks about him.)
This was that for me.

HAMM *(proudly)*:
But for me,
(gesture towards himself)
no father. But for Hamm,
(gesture towards surroundings)
no home.
(Pause.)

CLOV:
I'll leave you.



HAMM:
Did you ever think of one thing?

CLOV:
Never.

HAMM:
That here we're down in a hole.
(Pause.)
But beyond the hills? Eh? Perhaps it's still green. Eh?
(Pause.)
Flora! Pomona!
(Ecstatically.)
Ceres!
(Pause.)
Perhaps you won't need to go very far.

CLOV:
I can't go very far.
(Pause.)
I'll leave you.

HAMM:
Is my dog ready?

CLOV:
He lacks a leg.

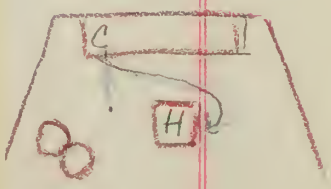
HAMM:
Is he silky?

CLOV:
He's a kind of Pomeranian.

HAMM:
Go and get him.

CLOV:
He lacks a leg.

HAMM:
Go and get him!
(Exit Clov.)
We're getting on.
(Enter Clov holding by one of its three legs a black toy dog.)



CLOV:
Your dogs are here.
(He hands the dog to Hamm who feels it, fondles it.)

HAMM:
He's white, isn't he?

CLOV:
Nearly.

HAMM:
What do you mean, nearly? Is he white or isn't he?

CLOV:
He isn't.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
You've forgotten the sex.

CLOV *(vexed)*:
But he isn't finished. The sex goes on at the end.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
You haven't put on his ribbon.

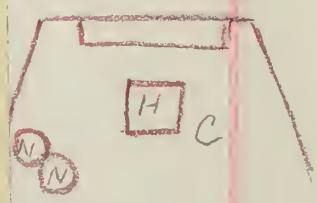
CLOV *(angrily)*:
But he isn't finished, I tell you! First you finish your dog and then you put on his ribbon!
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Can he stand?

CLOV:
I don't know.

HAMM:
Try.
(He hands the dog to Clov who places it on the ground.)
Well?

CLOV:
Wait!
(He squats down and tries to get the dog to stand on its three legs, fails, lets it go. The dog falls on its side.)



HAMM *(impatiently)*:
Well?

CLOV:
He's standing.

HAMM *(groping for the dog)*:
Where? Where is he?
(Clov holds up the dog in a standing position.)

CLOV:
There.
(He takes Hamm's hand and guides it towards the dog's head.)

HAMM *(his hand on the dog's head)*:
Is he gazing at me?

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM *(proudly)*:
As if he were asking me to take him for a walk?

CLOV:
If you like.

HAMM *(as before)*:
Or as if he were begging me for a bone.
(He withdraws his hand.)
Leave him like that, standing there imploring me.
(Clov straightens up. The dog falls on its side.)

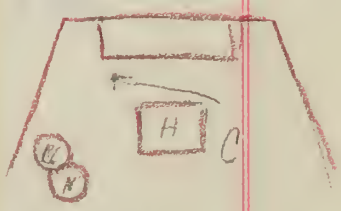
CLOV:
I'll leave you.

HAMM:
Have you had your visions?

CLOV:
Less.

HAMM:
Is Mother Pegg's light on?

CLOV:
Light! How could anyone's light be on?



HAMM:
Extinguished!

CLOV:
Naturally it's extinguished. If it's not on it's extinguished.

HAMM:
No, I mean Mother Pegg.

CLOV:
But naturally she's extinguished!
(Pause.)
What's the matter with you today?

HAMM:
I'm taking my course.
(Pause.)
Is she buried?

CLOV:
Buried! Who would have buried her?

HAMM:
You.

CLOV:
Me! Haven't I enough to do without burying people?

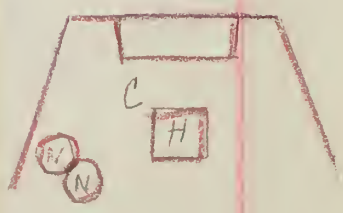
HAMM:
But you'll bury me.

CLOV:
No I won't bury you.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
She was bonny once, like a flower of the field.
(With reminiscent leer.)
And a great one for the men!

CLOV:
We too were bonny—once. It's a rare thing not to have been bonny—once.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Go and get the gaff.



(Clov goes to door, halts.)

CLOV:
Do this, do that, and I do it. I never refuse. Why?

HAMM:
You're not able to.

CLOV:
Soon I won't do it any more.

HAMM:
You won't be able to any more.
(Exit Clov.)
Ah the creatures, the creatures, everything has to be explained to them.
(Enter Clov with gaff.)

CLOV:
Here's your gaff. Stick it up.
(He gives the gaff to Hamm who, wielding it like a puntpole, tries to move his chair.)

HAMM:
Did I move?

CLOV:
No.
(Hamm throws down the gaff.)

HAMM:
Go and get the oilcan.

CLOV:
What for?

HAMM:
To oil the castors.

CLOV:
I oiled them yesterday.

HAMM:
Yesterday! What does that mean? Yesterday!

CLOV *(violently)*:
That means that bloody awful day, long ago, before this bloody

awful day. I use the words you taught me. If they don't mean anything any more, teach me others. Or let me be silent.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
I once knew a madman who thought the end of the world had come. He was a painter—and engraver. I had a great fondness for him. I used to go and see him, in the asylum. I'd take him by the hand and drag him to the window. Look! There! All that rising corn! And there! Look! The sails of the herring fleet! All that loveliness!
(Pause.)
He'd snatch away his hand and go back into his corner. Appalled. All he had seen was ashes.
(Pause.)
He alone had been spared.
(Pause.)
Forgotten.
(Pause.)
It appears the case is . . . was not so . . . so unusual.

CLOV:
A madman? When was that?

HAMM:
Oh way back, way back, you weren't in the land of the living.

CLOV:
God be with the days!
(Pause. Hamm raises his toque.)

HAMM:
I had a great fondness for him.
(Pause. He puts on his toque again.)
He was a painter—and engraver.

CLOV:
There are so many terrible things.

HAMM:
No, no, there are not so many now.

(Pause.)
Clov!

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM:
Do you not think this has gone on long enough?

CLOV:
Yes!
(Pause.)
What?

HAMM:
This . . . this . . . thing.

CLOV:
I've always thought so.
(Pause.)
You not?

HAMM *(gloomily)*:
Then it's a day like any other day.

CLOV:
As long as it lasts.
(Pause.)
All life long the same inanities.

HAMM:
I can't leave you.

CLOV:
I know. And you can't follow me.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
If you leave me how shall I know?

CLOV *(briskly)*:
Well you simply whistle me and if I don't come running it means I've left you.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
You won't come and kiss me goodbye?

CLOV:
Oh I shouldn't think so.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
But you might be merely dead in your kitchen.

CLOV:
The result would be the same.

HAMM:
Yes, but how would I know, if you were merely dead in your kitchen?

CLOV:
Well . . . sooner or later I'd start to stink.

HAMM:
You stink already. The whole place stinks of corpses.

CLOV:
The whole universe.

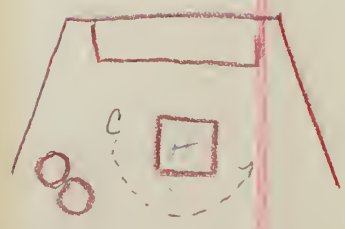
HAMM *(angrily)*:
To hell with the universe.
(Pause.)
Think of something.

CLOV:
What?

HAMM:
An idea, have an idea.
(Angrily.)
A bright idea!

CLOV:
Ah good.
(He starts pacing to and fro, his eyes fixed on the ground, his hands behind his back. He halts.)
The pains in my legs! It's unbelievable! Soon I won't be able to think any more.

HAMM:
You won't be able to leave me.



(Clov resumes his pacing.)
What are you doing?

CLOV:
Having an idea.
(He paces.)
Ah!
(He halts.)

HAMM:
What a brain!
(Pause.)
Well?

CLOV:
Wait!
(He meditates. Not very convinced.)
Yes . . .
(Pause. More convinced.)
Yes!
(He raises his head.)
I have it! I set the alarm.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
This is perhaps not one of my bright days, but frankly—

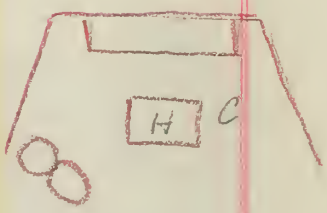
CLOV:
You whistle me. I don't come. The alarm rings. I'm gone. It doesn't ring. I'm dead.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Is it working?
(Pause. Impatiently.)
The alarm, is it working?

CLOV:
Why wouldn't it be working?

HAMM:
Because it's worked too much.

CLOV:
But it's hardly worked at all.



HAMM *(angrily)*:
Then because it's worked too little!

CLOV:
I'll go and see.
(Exit Clov. Brief ring of alarm off. Enter Clov with alarm-clock. He holds it against Hamm's ear and releases alarm. They listen to it ringing to the end. Pause.)
Fit to wake the dead! Did you hear it?

HAMM:
Vaguely.

CLOV:
The end is terrific!

HAMM:
I prefer the middle.
(Pause.)
Is it not time for my pain-killer?

CLOV:
No!
(He goes to door, turns.)
I'll leave you.

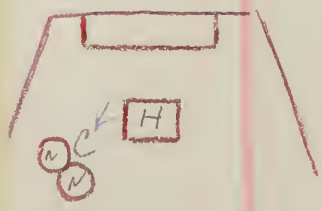
HAMM:
It's time for my story. Do you want to listen to my story.

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
Ask my father if he wants to listen to my story.
(Clov goes to bins, raises the lid of Nagg's, stoops, looks into it. Pause. He straightens up.)

CLOV:
He's asleep.

HAMM:
Wake him.
(Clov stoops, wakes Nagg with the alarm. Unintelligible words. Clov straightens up.)



CLOV:
He doesn't want to listen to your story.

HAMM:
I'll give him a bon-bon.
(Clov stoops. As before.)

CLOV:
He wants a sugar-plum.

HAMM:
He'll get a sugar-plum.
(Clov stoops. As before.)

CLOV:
It's a deal.
(He goes towards door. Nagg's hands appear, gripping the rim. Then the head emerges. Clov reaches door, turns.)
Do you believe in the life to come?

HAMM:
Mine was always that.
(Exit Clov.)
Got him that time! (I'm a great one!)

NAGG:
I'm listening.

HAMM:
Scoundrel! Why did you engender me?

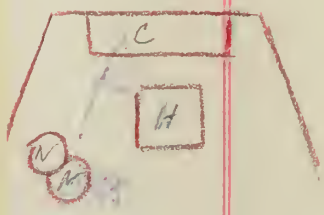
NAGG:
I didn't know.

HAMM:
What? What didn't you know? (Laughing, exactly, not!)

NAGG:
That it'd be you. (Hamm settles himself back in the armchair)
(Pause.)
You'll give me a sugar-plum?

HAMM:
After the audition.

NAGG:
You swear?



HAMM:
Yes.

NAGG:
On what?

HAMM:
My honor.
(Pause. They laugh heartily.)

NAGG:
Two.

HAMM:
One.

NAGG:
One for me and one for—

HAMM:
One! Silence!
(Pause.)
Where was I?
(Pause. Gloomily.)
It's finished, we're finished.
(Pause.)
Nearly finished.
(Pause.)
There'll be no more speech.
(Pause.)
Something dripping in my head, ever since the fontanelles.
(Stifled hilarity of Nagg.)
Splash, splash, always on the same spot.
(Pause.)
Perhaps it's a little vein.
(Pause.)
A little artery.
(Pause. More animated.)
Enough of that, it's story time, where was I?
(Pause. Narrative tone.)
The man came crawling towards me, on his belly. Pale, wonderfully pale and thin, he seemed on the point of—

(Pause. Normal tone.)
No, I've done that bit.
(Pause. Narrative tone.)
I calmly filled my pipe—the meerschaum, lit it with . . . let us say a vesta, drew a few puffs. Aah!
(Pause.)
Well, what is it *you* want?
(Pause.)
It was an extra-ordinarily bitter day, I remember, zero by the thermometer. But considering it was Christmas Eve there was nothing . . . extra-ordinary about that. Seasonable weather, for once in a way.
(Pause.)
Well, what ill wind blows you my way? He raised his face to me, black with mingled dirt and tears.
(Pause. Normal tone.)
That should do it. (rather good!)
(Narrative tone.)
No no, don't look at me, don't look at me. He dropped his eyes and mumbled something, apologies I presume.
(Pause.)
I'm a busy man, you know, the final touches, before the festivities, you know what it is.
(Pause. Forcibly.)
Come on now, what is the object of this invasion?
(Pause.)
It was a glorious bright day, I remember, fifty by the heliometer, but already the sun was sinking down into the . . . down among the dead.
(Normal tone.)
Nicely put, that. (very pleased)
(Narrative tone.)
Come on now, come on, present your petition and let me resume my labors.
(Pause. Normal tone.)
There's English for you. Ah well . . . (rather modest!)
(Narrative tone.)

It was then he took the plunge. It's my little one, he said. Tsstss, a little one, that's bad. My little boy, he said, as if the sex mattered. Where did he come from? He named the hole. A good half-day, on horse. What are you insinuating? That the place is still inhabited? No no, not a soul, except himself and the child—assuming he existed. Good. I enquired about the situation at Kov, beyond the gulf. Not a sinner. Good. And you expect me to believe you have left your little one back there, all alone, and alive into the bargain? Come now!

(Pause.)

It was a howling wild day, I remember, a hundred by the anenometer. The wind was tearing up the dead pines and sweeping them . . . away.

(Pause. Normal tone.)

A bit feeble, that.

(Narrative tone.)

Come on, man, speak up, what is you want from me, I have to put up my holly.

(Pause.)

Well to make it short it finally transpired that what he wanted from me was . . . bread for his brat? Bread? But I have no bread, it doesn't agree with me. Good. Then perhaps a little corn?

(Pause. Normal tone.)

That should do it.

(Narrative tone.)

Corn, yes, I have corn, it's true, in my granaries. But use your head. I give you some corn, a pound, a pound and a half, you bring it back to your child and you make him—if he's still alive—a nice pot of porridge,

(Nagg reacts)

a nice pot and a half of porridge, full of nourishment. Good. The colors come back into his little cheeks—perhaps. And then?

(Pause.)

I lost patience.

(Violently.)
Use your head, can't you, use your head, you're on earth, there's no cure for that!
(Pause.)
It was an exceedingly dry day, I remember, zero by the hygrometer. Ideal weather, for my lumbago.
(Pause. Violently.)
But what in God's name do you imagine? That the earth will awake in spring? That the rivers and seas will run with fish again? That there's manna in heaven still for imbeciles like you?
(Pause.)
Gradually I cooled down, sufficiently at least to ask him how long he had taken on the way. Three whole days. Good. In what condition he had left the child. Deep in sleep.
(Forcibly.)
But deep in what sleep, deep in what sleep already?
(Pause.)
Well to make it short I finally offered to take him into my service. He had touched a chord. And then I imagined already that I wasn't much longer for this world.
(He laughs. Pause.)
Well?
(Pause.)
Well? Here if you were careful you might die a nice natural death, in peace and comfort.
(Pause.)
Well?
(Pause.)
In the end he asked me would I consent to take in the child as well—if he were still alive.
(Pause.)
It was the moment I was waiting for.
(Pause.)
Would I consent to take in the child . . .
(Pause.)
I can see him still, down on his knees, his hands flat on the

ground, glaring at me with his mad eyes, in defiance of my wishes.

(Pause. Normal tone.)

I'll soon have finished with this story.

(Pause.)

Unless I bring in other characters.

end of beat

(Pause.)

But where would I find them? where is everyone?

(Pause.)

Where would I look for them?

(Pause. He whistles. Enter Clov.)

Let us pray to God. (end of sermon)

NAGG:
Me sugar-plum!

CLOV:
There's a rat in the kitchen!

HAMM:
A rat! Are there still rats? (appalled!)

CLOV:
In the kitchen there's one.

HAMM:
And you haven't exterminated him?

CLOV:
Half. You disturbed us.

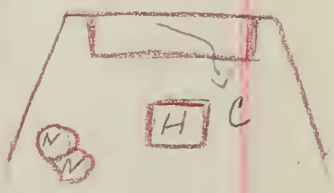
HAMM:
He can't get away?

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
You'll finish him later. Let us pray to God.

CLOV:
Again!

NAGG:
Me sugar-plum!



HAMM:
God first!
(Pause.)
Are you right?

CLOV *(resigned)*:
Off we go.

HAMM *(to Nagg)*:
And you?

NAGG *(clasping his hands, closing his eyes, in a gabble)*:
Our Father which art—

HAMM:
Silence! In silence! Where are your manners?
(Pause.)
Off we go.
(Attitudes of prayer. Silence. Abandoning his attitude, discouraged.)
Well?

CLOV *(abandoning his attitude)*:
What a hope! And you?

HAMM:
Sweet damn all!
(To Nagg.)
And you?

NAGG:
Wait!
(Pause. Abandoning his attitude.)
Nothing doing!

HAMM:
The bastard! He doesn't exist!

CLOV:
Not yet.

NAGG:
Me sugar-plum!

HAMM:
There are no more sugar-plums!

(Pause.)

NAGG:

It's natural. After all I m your father. It's true if it hadn't been me it would have been someone else. But that's no excuse.

(Pause.)

Turkish Delight, for example, which no longer exists, we all know that, there is nothing in the world I love more. And one day I'll ask you for some, in return for a kindness, and you'll promise it to me. One must live with the times.

(Pause.)

Whom did you call when you were a tiny boy, and were frightened, in the dark? Your mother? No. Me. We let you cry. Then we moved you out of earshot, so that we might sleep in peace.

(Pause.)

I was asleep, as happy as a king, and you woke me up to have me listen to you. It wasn't indispensable, you didn't really need to have me listen to you.

(Pause.)

I hope the day will come when you'll really need to have me listen to you, and need to hear my voice, any voice.

(Pause.)

Yes, I hope I'll live till then, to hear you calling me like when you were a tiny boy, and were frightened, in the dark, and I was your only hope.

(Pause. Nagg knocks on lid of Nell's bin. Pause.)

Nell!

(Pause. He knocks louder. Pause. Louder.)

Nell!

(Pause. Nagg sinks back into his bin, closes the lid behind him. Pause.)

HAMM:

Our revels now are ended.

(He gropes for the dog.)

The dog's gone.

CLOV:

He's not a real dog, he can't go.

HAMM *(groping)*:
He's not there.

CLOV:
He's lain down.

HAMM:
Give him up to me.
(Clov picks up the dog and gives it to Hamm. Hamm holds it in his arms. Pause. Hamm throws away the dog.)
Dirty brute!
(Clov begins to pick up the objects lying on the ground.)
What are you doing?

CLOV:
Putting things in order.
(He straightens up. Fervently.)
I'm going to clear everything away!
(He starts picking up again.)

HAMM:
Order!

CLOV *(straightening up)*:
I love order. It's my dream. A world where all would be silent and still and each thing in its last place, under the last dust.
(He starts picking up again.)

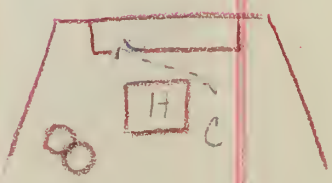
HAMM *(exasperated)*:
What in God's name do you think you are doing?

CLOV *(straightening up)*:
I'm doing my best to create a little order.

HAMM:
Drop it!
(Clov drops the objects he has picked up.)

CLOV:
After all, there or elsewhere.
(He goes towards door.)

HAMM (irritably):
What's wrong with your feet?



CLOV:
My feet?

HAMM:
Tramp! Tramp!

CLOV:
I must have put on my boots.

HAMM:
Your slippers were hurting you?
(Pause.)

CLOV:
I'll leave you.

HAMM:
No!

CLOV:
What is there to keep me here?

HAMM:
The dialogue.
(Pause.)
I've got on with my story.
(Pause.)
I've got on with it well.
(Pause. Irritably.)
Ask me where I've got to.

CLOV:
Oh, by the way, your story?

HAMM *(surprised)*:
What story?

CLOV:
The one you've been telling yourself all your days.

HAMM:
Ah you mean my chronicle?

CLOV:
That's the one.
(Pause.)

HAMM *(angrily)*:
Keep going, can't you, keep going!

CLOV:
You've got on with it, I hope.

HAMM *(modestly)*:
Oh not very far, not very far.
(He sighs.)
There are days like that, one isn't inspired.
(Pause.)
Nothing you can do about it, just wait for it to come.
(Pause.)
No forcing, no forcing, it's fatal.
(Pause.)
I've got on with it a little all the same.
(Pause.)
Technique, you know.
(Pause. Irritably.)
I say I've got on with it a little all the same.

CLOV *(admiringly)*:
Well I never! In spite of everything you were able to get on with it!

HAMM *(modestly)*:
Oh not very far, you know, not very far, but nevertheless, better than nothing.

CLOV:
Better than nothing! Is it possible?

HAMM:
I'll tell you how it goes. He comes crawling on his belly—

CLOV:
Who?

HAMM:
What?

CLOV:
Who do you mean, he?

HAMM:
Who do I mean! Yet another.

CLOV:
Ah him! I wasn't sure.

HAMM:
Crawling on his belly, whining for bread for his brat. He's offered a job as gardener. Before—
(Clov bursts out laughing.)
What is there so funny about that?

CLOV:
A job as gardener!

HAMM:
Is that what tickles you?

CLOV:
It must be that.

HAMM:
It wouldn't be the bread?

CLOV:
Or the brat.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
The whole thing is comical, I grant you that. What about having a good guffaw the two of us together?

CLOV *(after reflection)*:
I couldn't guffaw again today.

HAMM *(after reflection)*:
Nor I.
(Pause.)
I continue then. Before accepting with gratitude he asks if he may have his little boy with him.

CLOV:
What age?

HAMM:
Oh tiny.

CLOV:
He would have climbed the trees.

HAMM:
All the little odd jobs.

CLOV:
And then he would have grown up.

HAMM:
Very likely.
(Pause.)

CLOV:
Keep going, can't you, keep going!

HAMM:
That's all. I stopped there.
(Pause.)

CLOV:
Do you see how it goes on.

HAMM:
More or less.

CLOV:
Will it not soon be the end?

HAMM:
I'm afraid it will.

CLOV:
Pah! You'll make up another.

HAMM:
I don't know.
(Pause.)
I feel rather drained.
(Pause.)
The prolonged creative effort.
(Pause.)
If I could drag myself down to the sea! I'd make a pillow of sand for my head and the tide would come.

CLOV:
There's no more tide.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Go and see is she dead.
(Clov goes to bins, raises the lid of Nell's, stoops, looks into it. Pause.)

CLOV:
Looks like it.
(He closes the lid, straightens up. Hamm raises his toque. Pause. He puts it on again.)

HAMM *(with his hand to his toque)*:
And Nagg?
(Clov raises lid of Nagg's bin, stoops, looks into it. Pause.)

CLOV:
Doesn't look like it.
(He closes the lid, straightens up.)

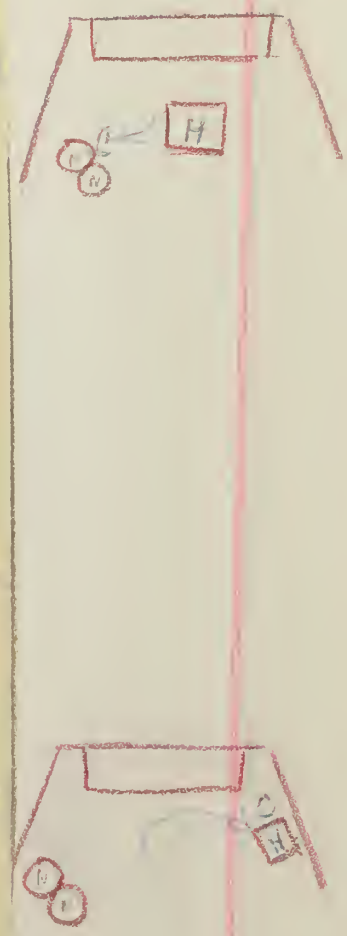
HAMM *(letting go his toque)*:
What's he doing?
(Clov raises lid of Nagg's bin, stoops, looks into it. Pause.)

CLOV:
He's crying.
(He closes lid, straightens up.)

HAMM:
Then he's living.
(Pause.)
Did you ever have an instant of happiness?

CLOV:
Not to my knowledge.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Bring me under the window.
(Clov goes towards chair.)
I want to feel the light on my face.
(Clov pushes chair.)
Do you remember, in the beginning, when you took me for



a turn? You used to hold the chair too high. At every step you nearly tipped me out.
(With senile quaver.)
Ah great fun, we had, the two of us, great fun.
(Gloomily.)
And then we got into the way of it.
(Clov stops the chair under window right.)
There already?
(Pause. He tilts back his head.)
Is it light?

CLOV:
It isn't dark.

HAMM *(angrily)*:
I'm asking you is it light.

CLOV:
Yes.
(Pause.)

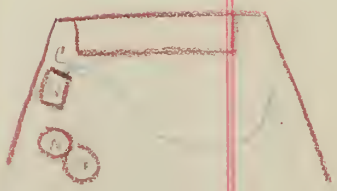
HAMM:
The curtain isn't closed?

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
What window is it?

CLOV:
The earth.

HAMM:
I knew it!
(Angrily.)
But there's no light there! The other!
(Clov pushes chair towards window left.)
The earth!
Clov stops the chair under window left. Hamm tilts back his head.)
That's what I call light!
(Pause.)
Feels like a ray of sunshine.



(Pause.)
No?

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
It isn't a ray of sunshine I feel on my face?

CLOV:
No.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Am I very white?
(Pause. Angrily.)
I'm asking you am I very white!

CLOV:
Not more so than usual.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Open the window.

CLOV:
What for?

HAMM:
I want to hear the sea.

CLOV:
You wouldn't hear it.

HAMM:
Even if you opened the window?

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
Then it's not worth while opening it?

CLOV:
No.

HAMM *(violently)*:
Then open it!
(Clov gets up on the ladder, opens the window. Pause.)
Have you opened it?

CLOV:
Yes.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
You swear you've opened it?

CLOV:
Yes.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Well. . . !
(Pause.)
It must be very calm.
(Pause. Violently.)
I'm asking you is it very calm!

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM:
It's because there are no more navigators.
(Pause.)
You haven't much conversation all of a sudden. Do you not feel well?

CLOV:
I'm cold.

HAMM:
What month are we?
(Pause.)
Close the window, we're going back.
(Clov closes the window, gets down, pushes the chair back to its place, remains standing behind it, head bowed.)
Don't stay there, you give me the shivers!
(Clov returns to his place beside the chair.)

Father!
(Pause. Louder.)
Father!
(Pause.)
Go and see did he hear me.
(Clov goes to Nagg's bin, raises the lid, stoops. Uninitelligible words. Clov straightens up.)

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM:
Both times?
(Clov stoops. As before.)

CLOV:
Once only.

HAMM:
The first time or the second?
(Clov stoops. As before.)

CLOV:
He doesn't know.

HAMM:
It must have been the second.

CLOV:
We'll never know.
(He closes lid.)

HAMM:
Is he still crying?

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
The dead go fast.
(Pause.)
What's he doing?

CLOV:
Sucking his biscuit.

HAMM:
Life goes on.
(Clov returns to his place beside the chair.)
Give me a rug, I'm freezing.

CLOV:
There are no more rugs.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Kiss me.
(Pause.)
Will you not kiss me?

CLOV:
No.

HAMM:
On the forehead.

CLOV:
I won't kiss you anywhere.
(Pause.)

HAMM *(holding out his hand)*:
Give me your hand at least.
(Pause.)
Will you not give me your hand?

CLOV:
I won't touch you.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Give me the dog.
(Clov looks round for the dog.)
No!

CLOV:
Do you not want your dog?

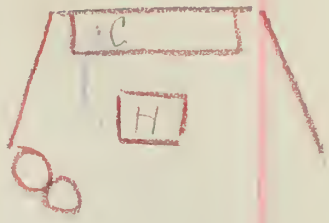
HAMM:
No.

CLOV:
Then I'll leave you.

HAMM *(head bowed, absently)*:
That's right.
(Clov goes to door, turns.)

CLOV:
If I don't kill that rat he'll die.

HAMM *(as before)*:
That's right.
(Exit Clov. Pause.)
Me to play.
(He takes out his handkerchief, unfolds it, holds it spread out before him.)
We're getting on.
(Pause.)
You weep, and weep, for nothing, so as not to laugh, and little by little . . . you begin to grieve.
(He folds the handkerchief, puts it back in his pocket, raises his head.)
All those I might have helped.
(Pause.)
Helped!
(Pause.)
Saved.
(Pause.)
Saved!
(Pause.)
The place was crawling with them!
(Pause. Violently.)
Use your head, can't you, use your head, you're on earth, there's no cure for that!
(Pause.)
Get out of here and love one another! Lick your neighbor as yourself!
(Pause. Calmer.)
When it wasn't bread they wanted it was crumpets.
(Pause. Violently.)



Out of my sight and back to your petting parties!
(Pause.)
All that, all that!
(Pause.)
Not even a real dog!
(Calmer.)
The end is in the beginning and yet you go on.
(Pause.)
Perhaps I could go on with my story, end it and begin another.
(Pause.)
Perhaps I could throw myself out on the floor.
(He pushes himself painfully off his his seat, falls back again.)
Dig my nails into the cracks and drag myself forward with my fingers.
(Pause.)
It will be the end and there I'll be, wondering what can have brought it on and wondering what can have . . .
(he hesitates)
. . . why it was so long coming.
(Pause.)
There I'll be, in the old shelter, alone against the silence and . . .
(he hesitates)
. . . the stillness. If I can hold my peace, and sit quiet, it will be all over with sound, and motion, all over and done with.
(Pause.)
I'll have called my father and I'll have called my . . .
(he hesitates)
. . . my son. And even twice, or three times, in case they shouldn't have heard me, the first time, or the second.
(Pause.)
I'll say to myself, He'll come back.
(Pause.)
And then?
(Pause.)
And then?
(Pause.)

He couldn't, he has gone too far.
(Pause.)
And then?
(Pause. Very agitated.)
All kinds of fantasies! That I'm being watched! A rat! Steps! Breath held and then . . .
(He breathes out.)
Then babble, babble, words, like the solitary child who turns himself into children, two, three, so as to be together, and whisper together, in the dark.
(Pause.)
Moment upon moment, pattering down, like the millet grains of . . .
(he hesitates)
. . . that old Greek, and all life long you wait for that to mount up to a life.
(Pause. He opens his mouth to continue, renounces.)
Ah let's get it over!
(He whistles. Enter Clov with alarm-clock. He halts beside the chair.)
What? Neither gone nor dead?

CLOV:
In spirit only.

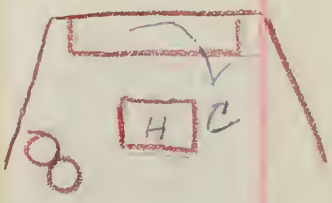
HAMM:
Which?

CLOV:
Both.

HAMM:
Gone from me you'd be dead.

CLOV:
And vice versa.

HAMM:
Outside of here it's death!
(Pause.)
And the rat?



CLOV:
He's got away.

HAMM:
He can't go far.
(Pause. Anxious.)
Eh?

CLOV:
He doesn't need to go far.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Is it not time for my pain-killer?

CLOV:
Yes.

HAMM:
Ah! At last! Give it to me! Quick!
(Pause.)

CLOV:
There's no more pain-killer.
(Pause.)

HAMM *(appalled)*:
Good. . . !
(Pause.)
No more pain-killer!

CLOV:
No more pain-killer. You'll never get any more pain-killer.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
But the little round box. It was full!

CLOV:
Yes. But now it's empty.
(Pause. Clov starts to move about the room. He is looking for a place to put down the alarm-clock.)

HAMM *(soft)*:
What'll I do?

(Pause. In a scream.)
What'll I do?
(Clov sees the picture, takes it down, stands it on the floor with its face to the wall, hangs up the alarm-clock in its place.) on ladder
What are you doing?

CLOV:
Winding up.

HAMM:
Look at the earth.

CLOV:
Again!

HAMM:
Since it's calling to you.

CLOV:
Is your throat sore?
(Pause.)
Would you like a lozenge?
(Pause.)
No.
(Pause.)
Pity.
(Clov goes, humming, towards window right, halts before it, looks up at it.)

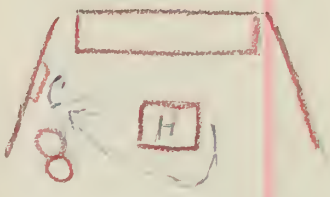
HAMM:
Don't sing.

CLOV *(turning towards Hamm)*:
One hasn't the right to sing any more?

HAMM:
No.

CLOV:
Then how can it end?

HAMM:
You want it to end?



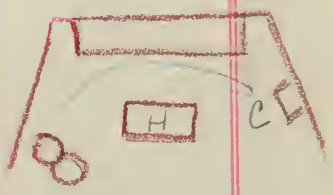
CLOV:
I want to sing.

HAMM:
I can't prevent you.
(Pause. Clov turns towards window right.)

CLOV:
What did I do with that steps?
(He looks around for ladder.)
You didn't see that steps?
(He sees it.)
Ah, about time.
(He goes towards window left.)
Sometimes I wonder if I'm in my right mind. Then it passes over and I'm as lucid as before.
(He gets up on ladder, looks out of window.)
Christ, she's under water!
(He looks.)
How can that be?
(He pokes forward his head, his hand above his eyes.)
It hasn't rained.
(He wipes the pane, looks. Pause.)
Ah what a fool I am! I'm on the wrong side!
(He gets down, takes a few steps towards window right.)
Under water!
(He goes back for ladder.)
What a fool I am!
(He carries ladder towards window right.)
Sometimes I wonder if I'm in my right senses. Then it passes off and I'm as intelligent as ever.
(He sets down ladder under window right, gets up on it, looks out of window. He turns towards Hamm.)
Any particular sector you fancy? Or merely the whole thing?

HAMM:
Whole thing.

CLOV:
The general effect? Just a moment.
(He looks out of window. Pause.)



HAMM:
Clov.

CLOV *(absorbed)*:
Mmm.

HAMM:
Do you know what it is?

CLOV *(as before)*:
Mmm.

HAMM:
I was never there.
(Pause.)
Clov!

CLOV *(turning towards Hamm, exasperated)*:
What is it?

HAMM:
I was never there.

CLOV:
Lucky for you.
(He looks out of window.)

HAMM:
Absent, always. It all happened without me. I don't know what's happened.
(Pause.)
Do you know what's happened?
(Pause.)
Clov!

CLOV *(turning towards Hamm, exasperated)*:
Do you want me to look at this muckheap, yes or no?

HAMM:
Answer me first.

CLOV:
What?

HAMM:
Do you know what's happened?

CLOV:
When? Where?

HAMM *(violently)*:
When! What's happened? Use your head, can't you! What has happened?

CLOV:
What for Christ's sake does it matter?
(He looks out of window.)

HAMM:
I don't know.
(Pause. Clov turns towards Hamm.)

CLOV *(harshly)*:
When old Mother Pegg asked you for oil for her lamp and you told her to get out to hell, you knew what was happening then, no?
(Pause.)
You know what she died of, Mother Pegg? Of darkness.

HAMM *(feebly)*:
I hadn't any.

CLOV *(as before)*:
Yes, you had.
(Pause.)

HAMM:
Have you the glass?

CLOV:
No, it's clear enough as it is.

HAMM:
Go and get it.
(Pause. Clov casts up his eyes, brandishes his fists. He loses balance, clutches on to the ladder. He starts to get down, halts.)

CLOV:
There's one thing I'll never understand.

(He gets down.)
Why I always obey you. Can you explain that to me?

HAMM:
No. . . . Perhaps it's compassion.
(Pause.)
A kind of great compassion.
(Pause.)
Oh you won't find it easy, you won't find it easy.
(Pause. Clov begins to move about the room in search of the telescope.)

CLOV:
I'm tired of our goings on, very tired.
(He searches.)
You're not sitting on it?
(He moves the chair, looks at the place where it stood, resumes his search.)

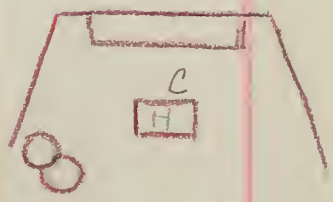
HAMM *(anguished)*:
Don't leave me there!
(Angrily Clov restores the chair to its place.)
Am I right in the center?

CLOV:
You'd need a microscope to find this—
(He sees the telescope.)
Ah, about time.
(He picks up the telescope, gets up on the ladder, turns the telescope on the without.)

HAMM:
Give me the dog.

CLOV *(looking)*:
Quiet!

HAMM *(angrily)*:
Give me the dog!
(Clov drops the telescope, clasps his hands to his head. Pause. He gets down precipitately, looks for the dog, sees it, picks it up, hastens towards Hamm and strikes him violently on the head with the dog.)



CLOV:
There's your dog for you!
(The dog falls to the ground. Pause.)

HAMM:
He hit me!

CLOV:
You drive me mad, I'm mad!

HAMM:
If you must hit me, hit me with the axe.
(Pause.)
Or with the gaff, hit me with the gaff. Not with the dog. With the gaff. Or with the axe.
(Clov picks up the dog and gives it to Hamm who takes it in his arms.)

CLOV *(imploringly)*:
Let's stop playing!

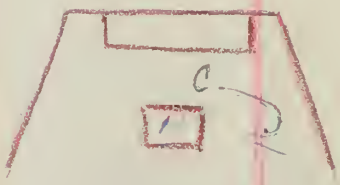
HAMM:
Never!
(Pause.)
Put me in my coffin.

CLOV:
There are no more coffins.

HAMM:
Then let it end!
(Clov goes towards ladder.)
With a bang!
(Clov gets up on ladder, gets down again, looks for telescope, sees it, picks it up, gets up ladder, raises telescope.)
Of darkness! And me? Did anyone ever have pity on me?

CLOV *(lowering the telescope, turning towards Hamm)*:
What?
(Pause.)
Is it me you're referring to?

HAMM *(angrily)*:
An aside, ape! Did you never hear an aside before?



(Pause.)
I'm warming up for my last soliloquy.

CLOV:
I warn you. I'm going to look at this filth since it's an order. But it's the last time.
(He turns the telescope on the without.)
Let's see.
(He moves the telescope.)
Nothing . . . nothing . . . good . . . good . . .nothing . . . goo—
(He starts, lowers the telescope, examines it, turns it again on the without. Pause.)
Bad luck to it!

HAMM:
More complications!
(Clov gets down.)
Not an underplot, I trust.
(Clov moves ladder nearer window, gets up on it, turns telescope on the without.)

CLOV *(dismayed)*:
Looks like a small boy!

HAMM *(sarcastic)*:
A small . . . boy!

CLOV:
I'll go and see.
(He gets down, drops the telescope, goes towards door, turns.)
I'll take the gaff.
(He looks for the gaff, sees it, picks it up, hastens towards door.)

HAMM:
No!
(Clov halts.)

CLOV:
No? A potential procreator?

HAMM:
If he exists he'll die there or he'll come here. And if he doesn't . . .

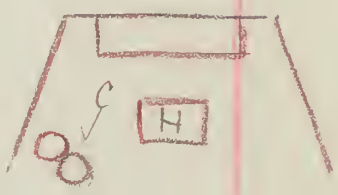
(Pause.)

CLOV:
You don't believe me? You think I'm inventing?
(Pause.)

HAMM:
It's the end, Clov, we've come to the end. I don't need you any more.
(Pause.)

CLOV:
Lucky for you.
(He goes towards door.)

HAMM:
Leave me the gaff.
(Clov gives him the gaff, goes towards door, halts, looks at alarm-clock, takes it down, looks round for a better place to put it, goes to bins, puts it on lid of Nagg's bin. Pause.)



CLOV:
I'll leave you.
(He goes towards door.)

HAMM:
Before you go . . .
(Clov halts near door.)
. . . say something.

CLOV:
There is nothing to say.

HAMM:
A few words . . . to ponder . . . in my heart.

CLOV:
Your heart!

HAMM:
Yes .
(Pause. Forcibly.)
Yes!
(Pause.)

With the rest, in the end, the shadows, the murmurs, all the trouble, to end up with.
(Pause.)
Clov. . . . He never spoke to me. Then, in the end, before he went, without my having asked him, he spoke to me. He said . . .

CLOV *(despairingly)*:
Ah. . . !

HAMM:
Something . . . from your heart.

CLOV:
My heart!

HAMM:
A few words . . . from your heart.
(Pause.)

CLOV *(fixed gaze, tonelessly, towards auditorium)*:
They said to me, That's love, yes, yes, not a doubt, now you see how—

HAMM:
Articulate!

CLOV *(as before)*:
How easy it is. They said to me, That's friendship, yes, yes, no question, you've found it. They said to me, Here's the place, stop, raise your head and look at all that beauty. That order! They said to me, Come now, you're not a brute beast, think upon these things and you'll see how all becomes clear. And simple! They said to me, What skilled attention they get, all these dying of their wounds.

HAMM:
Enough!

CLOV *(as before)*:
I say to myself—sometimes, Clov, you must learn to suffer better than that if you want them to weary of punishing you

—one day. I say to myself—sometimes, Clov, you must be there better than that if you want them to let you go—one day. But I feel too old, and too far, to form new habits. Good, it'll never end, I'll never go.

(Pause.)

Then one day, suddenly, it ends, it changes, I don't understand, it dies, or it's me, I don't understand, that either. I ask the words that remain—sleeping, waking, morning, evening. They have nothing to say.

(Pause.)

I open the door of the cell and go. I am so bowed I only see my feet, if I open my eyes, and between my legs a little trail of black dust. I say to myself that the earth is extinguished, though I never saw it lit.

(Pause.)

It's easy going.

(Pause.)

When I fall I'll weep for happiness.

(Pause. He goes towards door.)

HAMM:

Clov!

(Clov halts, without turning.)

Nothing.

(Clov moves on.)

Clov!

(Clov halts, without turning.)

CLOV:

This is what we call making an exit.

HAMM:

I'm obliged to you, Clov. For your services.

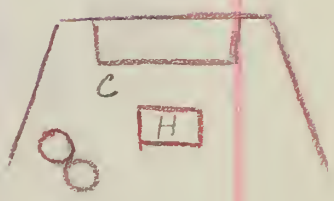
CLOV *(turning, sharply)*:

Ah pardon, it's I am obliged to you.

HAMM:

It's we are obliged to each other.

(Pause. Clov goes towards door.)



One thing more.
(Clov halts.)
A last favor.
(Exit Clov.)
Cover me with the sheet.
(Long pause.)
No? Good.
(Pause.)
Me to play.
(Pause. Wearily.)
Old endgame lost of old, play and lose and have done with losing.
(Pause. More animated.)
Let me see.
(Pause.)
Ah yes!
(He tries to move the chair, using the gaff as before. Enter Clov, dressed for the road. Panama hat, tweed coat, raincoat over his arm, umbrella, bag. He halts by the door and stands there, impassive and motionless, his eyes fixed on Hamm, till the end. Hamm gives up.)
Good.
(Pause.)
Discard.
(He throws away the gaff, makes to throw away the dog, thinks better of it.)
Take it easy.
(Pause.)
And now?
(Pause.)
Raise hat.
(He raises his toque.)
Peace to our . . . arses.
(Pause.)
And put on again.
(He puts on his toque.)
Deuce.
(Pause. He takes off his glasses.)
Wipe.

(He takes out his handkerchief and, without unfolding it, wipes his glasses.)
And put on again.
(He puts on his glasses, puts back the handkerchief in his pocket.)
We're coming. A few more squirms like that and I'll call.
(Pause.)
A little poetry.
(Pause.)
You prayed—
(Pause. He corrects himself.)
You CRIED for night; it comes—
(Pause. He corrects himself.)
It FALLS: now cry in darkness.
(He repeats, chanting.)
You cried for night; it falls: now cry in darkness.
(Pause.)
Nicely put, that.
(Pause.)
And now?
(Pause.)
Moments for nothing, now as always, time was never and time is over, reckoning closed and story ended.
(Pause. Narrative tone.)
If he could have his child with him. . . .
(Pause.)
It was the moment I was waiting for.
(Pause.)
You don't want to abandon him? You want him to bloom while you are withering? Be there to solace your last million last moments?
(Pause.)
He doesn't realize, all he knows is hunger, and cold, and death to crown it all. But you! You ought to know what the earth is like, nowadays. Oh I put him before his responsibilities!
(Pause. Normal tone.)
Well, there we are, there I am, that's enough.

(He raises the whistle to his lips, hesitates, drops it. Pause.)
Yes, truly!
(He whistles. Pause. Louder. Pause.)
Good.
(Pause.)
Father!
(Pause. Louder.)
Father!
(Pause.)
Good.
(Pause.)
We're coming.
(Pause.)
And to end up with?
(Pause.)
Discard.
(He throws away the dog. He tears the whistle from his neck.)
With my compliments.
(He throws whistle towards auditorium. Pause. He sniffs. Soft.)
Clov!
(Long pause.)
No? Good.
(He takes out the handkerchief.)
Since that's the way we're playing it . . .
(he unfolds handkerchief)
. . . let's play it that way . . .
(he unfolds)
. . . and speak no more about it . . .
(he finishes unfolding)
. . . speak no more.
(He holds handkerchief spread out before him.)
Old stancher!
(Pause.)
You . . . remain.
(Pause. He covers his face with handkerchief, lowers his arms to armrests, remains motionless.)
(Brief tableau.)

Curtain